THE

CHINESE SPY;

OR,

EMISSARY from the Court of PEKIN,

Commiſſioned to examine into

THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE.

Tranſlated from the CHINESE.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

DUBLIN:

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MDCCLXVI.

THE CHINESE SPY.

LETTER I.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi *at* Paris.

Turin.

THE court of Turin is ſo ſmall, that without a microſcope there is no ſeeing it. It is a miniature: at firſt I had ſome thoughts of buying it, to ſend it to Pekin, as a very pretty ornament for our ſublime emperor's cloſet. It is only a ſketch of magnificence, a copy of dignity, the original of which is to be ſeen at Verſailles. Every thing in it is little, except the king: and it is not the largeneſs of his ſize I mean, that being but middling; but he has a great ſoul.

Royalty, in this family, is quite recent; and it is not the growth of the country; for this crown comes to him from beyond ſea, ſo that not having been made for his head, it is a great chance whether it will fit him. It is properly no more than a king's commiſſion. The pope grants bulls to biſhops; and Europe has given Victor Amadeus a king's patent.

The dukes of Savoy ſeem intended to be titular kings; they took on themſelves the ſtile of king of Jeruſalem, long before adding to it that of the deſert iſland, which at preſent conſtitutes their prin-

cipal title. Thus have they combined an ideal monarchy with a chimerical power: but there's nothing loſt in ſuch bargains; or rather one thing is certainly got by it, the title of king.

A Chriſtian prince who throws aſide the name of highneſs to be inveſted with that of majeſty, always finds his account in it; for in Europe, the higher the title, the more reſpect and confidence.

It is ſaid, that in former times, when the popes were only called biſhops, they were contumeliouſly treated, and ſometimes even put to death; but on their arrogating to themſelves the title of ſaints, their perſon was held ſacred and inviolable. The Jews, a ſordid ſet of people, whoſe whole faith is lucre, gave credit to a pennyleſs adventurer, named Theodore, only upon his being proclaimed king by a handful of rebellious ragged mountaineers. Dazzled by this appellation, they truſted him with no inconſiderable ſums.

God created the world out of a little mud; and the dukes of Savoy have formed their power from political materials.

Originally the princes of this ſovereignty were but private perſons, theſe private perſons ſet up for gentlemen, theſe gentlemen became dukes, and theſe dukes founded a city. This city they immediately ſtiled a ſtate; and afterwards raiſed it to a kingdom: thus Europe ſaw a new power erected in it.

In this ſucceſſive promotion much intrigue was neceſſary, the myſteries of foreign cabinets were to be ſeen through, generals faults to be taken advantage of, the activity of ſome, and the indolence of others to be improved; wars were to be maintained, negociations to be entered into, marriages to be contracted, alliances to be made, treaties to be ſigned, and, as intereſt required, to be broken. Thus it is that a government has been formed out of nothing, and a monarchy raiſed on the foundation of its own inſufficiency.

The

The hiſtory of the houſe of Savoy is the moſt finiſhed piece of European policy. It exhibits a methodical plan of aggrandizement, a refined ambition, deſcending from father to ſon; a ſcheme of elevation ever conſiſtent, through a ſucceſſion of ages. The fortune of this houſe is a ſpectacle worthy the attention of the univerſe. It is a coherent ſyſtem, leading, by inſenſible gradation, to the ſummit of human greatneſs.

Other ſovereign houſes were ſometimes forgetful of their fortune, and often loſt ſight of themſelves; but this never deviated from the path which it had traced for its exaltation. The firſt foundation of this power had in ſome meaſure been laid by nature.

The dukes of Savoy were maſters of the keys of Italy, which has ever been an object of emulation among the European potentates; ſo that other princes were under a neceſſity of aſking them leave to be ambitious; which enabled themſelves to be ſo. They often joined with foreigners to defend this fine country, and ſometimes in attacking it: but never did they allow any potentate to make himſelf maſter of a part of Italy, without another being ſecured to them. At each of theſe diſmemberments they took care to be gainers; and every acquiſition furniſhed them with claims to new territories.

Theſe dukes having thus aggrandized themſelves by the ſword, by intrigue and policy, by an exertion of virtues as well as of vices, were come at length to form a deſign of extending their conqueſts. Every thing concurred to the general invaſion which they meditated; and the houſe of Savoy was on the point of ſwallowing up a great part of the Roman empire, when an event happened which checked its ambition. The ſtory is ſad, and the Turin politicians cannot think of it without tears. You ſhall have an account of it in my next.

LET-

LETTER II.

The ſame to the ſame at Paris.

Turin.

THE dukes of Savoy, in all ages, whenever they opened the gates of Italy to foreigners, never allowed them to paſs through, but with a view of exciting revolutions, of which they might make their advantage. No ſooner was their turn ſerved, than they made the invaders croſs the Alps again, and ſhut the doors after them; diſliking any neighbours who, by their power, might prove troubleſome. The utmoſt they allowed them, after any conqueſts, was to ſend viceroys; however, ſome years ſince, the crown of Spain took it into its head to ſend kings. Naples received one from his hand; this was not worth minding, he being at a great diſtance, and unable to obſtruct any views of aggrandizement; but lately it has placed a king in the centre of Italy, and on the very frontiers of Savoy. Emanuel, the preſent duke, fought like a lion toward off this blow: this efforts for fruſtrating this intruſion are ſcarce to be paralleled.

He might the rather indulge himſelf in the hopes of overthrowing the Spaniſh deſigns, as the prince whom the court of Madrid intended for his near neighbour was a young man extremely fond of muſic, and who on the day of a deciſive battle, would thrill a ſong very prettily. Had it not been for the Mexico mines, Emanuel would probably have carried his point: but in Europe there is at preſent no fighting againſt gold; battering cannon can do nothing againſt that metal. Beſides, there was a woman's ambition in the caſe, and in obſtinacy that ſex has always exceeded the other. This woman would have ſold the Indies, Africa, and America, to buy her ſon a petty principality in Italy, the income of which is not worth mentioning.

Thus

Thus Spain prevailed againſt all the oppoſition of the court of Turin. The management of this war was irregular: it is ſcarce to be thought that a power will expend a hundred millions in the purchaſe of a ſtate which is not worth two; this claſhes with all the rules of policy, the maxim of which is intereſt. This event, however, ſhut up the duke of Savoy in his capital as in a kind of priſon; and at preſent Emanuel is ſo confined in it, that his politics want elbow-room.

Since this epocha Piedmont has as it were ſhrunk one half; empires like men being ſubject to viciſſitudes. Six hundred years ago the cabinet here was labouring to become a mighty power, and now it is reduced to a very petty ſtate.

The reigning prince may ſtill ſtrike out reſources from the revolutions of Europe, the overſights of courts, the errors of cabinets, and falſe meaſures; for all theſe may be turned to uſeful inſtruments in the hands of a wiſe ſovereign, who knows how to make the moſt of every thing.

Emanuel, who at preſent fills the throne, governs his dominions as God governs the world; that is, with admirable order and wiſdom: he is a great ſtateſman and a great general: the magnanimous prince and ſagacious politician are united in him. He unravels the moſt ſecret myſteries of cabinets, and ſees into the future occurrences of Europe.

Moſt monarchs, like common men are miſplaced. Europe has princes, who without genius and capacity, reign over immenſe nations; whilſt others, fit to govern the univerſe, have only a handful of ſubjects.

The life of this prince affords a circumſtance, which has ſcarce a parallel in all the hiſtories of Europe. By a very ſingular event, the King his father became his ſubject, and ſoon after his priſoner. He was put under arreſt by his order, and died in confinement. Some, to extenuate this, ſay, that as things were then circumſtanced, there was

no doing otherwiſe; ſtate neceſſity required it. Such reaſons, thou knoweſt, would not be admitted in China, where all political laws give place to paternal authority. However, this ſtate is as powerful as a ſmall ſtate can be. The King of Sardinia can keep on foot an army of forty thouſand men, and, what is ſtill better, can pay it, Other ſovereigns, to raiſe troops, muſt ſaddle the ſubjects with taxes; whereas he can make war, and his people live at their eaſe. His finances are well managed and in good condition; and arts and trades are brought to the higheſt pitch of perfection. Piedmont lays France under an annual contribution of ſeveral millions by its ſilks: in a word, the crown enjoys all its prerogatives and advantages; and this, perhaps, is the only government in the Chriſtian world, where all the parts are in proper vigour and conſiſtency.

I have not been able to diſcover, why this prince allows the ſubjects of the province, which gives name to his houſe, to leave the country. Not a a year paſſes without large colonies removing to live and die in another kingdom. The dirt at Paris maintains thirty thouſand Savoyards; but ſuch a poor ſubſiſtence, I am inclined to think, might be had amidſt their own mountains. I have heard ſeveral reaſons for this, but all too weak to be committed to paper.

The ſovereign here is making ſea-ports, with a view of ſetting up a kind of navy; I had rather he would deſiſt. When a ſtate is not thoroughly peopled, and has not within itſelf the firſt materials for a large commerce, navigation hurts it; as it deprives the uſeful trades of hands, for carrying on a branch of buſineſs which as yet is unneceſſary.

LETTER III.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN China the women are not ſeen; they hide themſelves under the veil of modeſty, and render themſelves inviſible to men, even when they appear in their preſence. Their dreſs, which chaſtity itſelf ſeems to have invented, conceals them from every body's eyes.

In Europe the women's cloaths are ſo tranſparent, that nothing is hid from the other ſex; the eye wantonly roves over all the apartments of voluptuouſneſs. What is a nudity at Pekin, is not ſo here. At Paris the women are bare from the forehead to below the boſom, from the hand to the elbow, from the foot to the calf of the leg; ſo that within three feet and a half they are quite naked. Deſire has but a ſhort ſtep to its intire gratification: here a lover enjoys near half the woman, before ſhe comes into his poſſeſſion.

A young perſon may at her marriage bring an unpolluted body to her huſband; but certainly her chaſtity goes no farther, having before proſtituted herſelf to the looks of all men. Moſt of the marriages in Europe are ſucceeded by an extreme coldneſs; it is becauſe they add little or nothing to the delight of the ſenſes.

In China, where, by the modeſty of apparel, men are debarred the enjoyments of ſight, marriage is pregnant with a variety of gratifications. Then it is we enjoy all that the eyes have not yet poſſeſſed.

LETTER IV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Superintendant of Religion at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN this city is an impious foundation, which muſt neceſſarily deprave the conſcience; the ſcope of it is to make people think differently from what they firſt believed: it is called the college of the foreign miſſions. This ſacrilegious inſtitution, making the worſhip of Chriſt all in all, would extirpate from the heart the holy principles of other religions.

The ſuperiors of this houſe no ſooner knew of ſome Chineſe being at Paris, than they determined to convert them to the faith, the name here given to apoſtacy. They ſent to us one of their colleagues, who expreſſed himſelf with very inſinuating mildneſs, and ſeriouſly adviſed me to renounce my belief, and embrace his, aſſuring me that by ſo doing, I ſhould gain heaven. He was entering on a long preamble concerning this, when I took the freedom to cut him ſhort: Good Sir, ſaid I, before you take the trouble of corroborating your principles, give me leave to make one overture to you; which is to quit your religion, and come over to that of Confucius; for if you think yourſelf warranted to induce me to apoſtacy, I have the ſame right towards you; and were all things otherwiſe equal, I have one reaſon more, my religion is of a longer ſtanding than yours. This propoſition ſilenced my antagoniſt; he underſtood by this argument that all which he could offer to me would be ineffectual; and ſo withdrew.

Never did the human mind ſtart a greater abſurdity than that of endeavouring to bring others to our opinion of the manner of worſhipping God. Beſides the heinouſneſs of the thing, the project is of itſelf impracticable. To require an unity in religion

gion is like obliging men to breathe the ſame air. Religions have a manifeſt affinity with conſtitutions, and the climates are certainly independent of each other. It is only caſting an eye on the form of the univerſe, to be convinced that the articles of faith cannot poſſibly be the ſame among different people. Religions muſt agree with the civil ſyſtems of each ſtate. The Chriſtian worſhip does not ſuit Japan better than that of Japan would the French ſyſtem. The plain conſequence is, that miſſionaries are diſturbers of the public peace, and puniſhable by laws eſtabliſhed throughout the whole univerſe. Though the Turks have, for commercial conſiderations, allowed the Chriſtians to ſettle in their empire, they are not to open their mouths about religion.

I have always diſliked that maxim of giving the Europeans leave to inſtil into our people tenets quite foreign to the climate of Pekin. A Chineſe Chriſtian is a civil monſter; he forgets that he has a father, remembering only that there is a pope: this is utterly overthrowing every article of our government, which is formed on paternal authority.

Apoſtacy is ſo far from having been of any benefit to the world, that as it proceeds from baſeneſs, it produces flagitiouſneſs. He who departs from his belief, falls from the virtues annexed to his primitive religion, and gives into all the vices of the new. Earth loſes by it, without heaven's being any gainer. I think, that for the order and peace of the univerſe, princes ſhould agree in a general law, making the change of religion certain death. I don't ſay that men ſhould be forced to worſhip the deity in one manner preferably to another; this would be tyranny: but they ſhould be obliged to keep to that particular manner of worſhip they had once profeſſed. This, inſtead of a moral regulation, being a coercive law, would be found more advantageous to ſociety than the beſt inſtitutions hitherto known.

LETTER V.

Sequel of the great Epochas of Europe.

Paris.

AMIDST the revolutions which ſhock Europe the ſee of Rome went on aggrandizing itſelf. Of all the governments among mankind never did any ſubſiſt longer, and with leſs interruption; and this, becauſe the popes governed the world by perſuaſion; whereas conquerors had ſubdued it by arms, which are never ſo ſtrong as to be above viciſſitudes.

The annals of this new empire deſerve a particular attention; yet hitherto veracity and preciſion are wanting in them. All its hiſtorians have diſfigured it; the authors who are of the religion of the popes, extol it beyond all reaſon; and they who are of a different belief as extravagantly inveigh againſt it.

It is impoſſible for one, who is or is not of this communion to treat this ſubject without partiality. He ſhould be neither European nor Chriſtian, otherwiſe he will certainly be prejudiced for or againſt.

The Roman church originally conſtituted a kind of ariſtocratical government; the biſhops and abbots (for the college of cardinals, as it is called, was not then known) formed its ſenate; the reſt of the clergy were the plebeians. The chief then had but little influence; the power of the popes at that time being pretty much like the authority of the doges of Venice, who are no more than the ſhadow of that power, of which they repreſent the body.

The biſhops often refuſed to comply with the pope's pleaſure, looking on him only as a brother; they made uſe againſt him of that very authority which they held of him: but as among the Europeans every thing degenerates into deſpotiſm, the the popes, by degrees, ingroſſed likewiſe the political

litical and civil power; and the eccleſiaſtical commonwealth became an abſolute monarchy.

Rome underwent a total change, when a community of poor Mandarins living on alms, became a large and ſplendid eccleſiaſtical ſtate.

The primary plan did not ſuit this elevation, as having been founded on Chriſtian humility and charity: theſe virtues conſtituted only believers, and ſubjects where what Rome inſiſted on.

But how to throw off that ſtate of lowlineſs ſhe had been placed in by the very religion of Chriſt? This is a point the European writers ſeem to ſlur over too negligently; it being a revolution to be claſſed among the principal events of the univerſe. Sects had been known to make their way to power by ſtruggle and violence; but this was the only one which had acquired dominion by intrigues.

The ſee of Rome did not owe its empire to fortuitous circumſtances; it was the effect of a methodical plan.

This church is a maſter-piece of human policy; it is not founded on a ſyſtem of religion, but on the knowledge of the human heart: it had the art to profit by its weakneſs, and to reap advantage from its very inſufficiency. Pagan Rome never made uſe of ſo much artifice to aggrandize itſelf. The policy of the Cæſars is nothing in compariſon to that of the popes. I cannot forbear endeavouring to give you a ſketch of it.

The moſt active governments in the world had their intervals of indolence, in which they loſt ſight of their power; whereas the policy of the ſee of Rome never had a ſingle inſtant of intermiſſion: its eye was inceſſantly fixed on its elevation.

It has riſen from the loweſt contempt and weakneſs to a ſupreme ſovereignty, and maintained itſelf for the long ſpace of eight hundred centuries. In its critical periods it kept itſelf from being cruſhed under the weight of viciſſitudes; and though it had ſome falls, it was only to riſe again in greater luſtre: it has not been without its reverſes; it has

been affronted and outraged; its power, its very exiſtence has been attacked: but without being intimidated, it overlooked all kinds of indignities, when it thought they might be made ſubſervient to its grandeur.

The popes were without paſſions; whatever violences were committed againſt them, if dragged to loathſome priſons, if groſsly inſulted, and even cruelly beaten, they bore with every thing, when any little addition might be made to their power. They ſeemed cordially to pardon, and never ſhewed any reſentment, but when revenge would promote their intereſt. It is impoſſible for men to carry on a ſcheme with more circumſpection and addreſs.

The Holy ſee, (for ſo this court is called) did commit ſome ſlips; one of the principal of which was applying for foreign aſſiſtance to ſupport its power. But this ſtep which was enough to ruin any other government, did not much affect that of Rome. The ſtrength of the general inſtitution corrected the errors of private adminiſtration.

Its throne has been filled by ſeveral flagitious and impious popes. One would would have thought that their profligacy muſt have weakened it; but Rome had fundamental laws, which ſupported it againſt the tranſitory vices of its heads. The ſtructure of its power, though liable to be ſhaken, could not be overthrown.

When the ſee of Rome was little, it concealed its littleneſs with ſuch dexterity, as not to be perceived; but when grown up it filled the univerſe with its name.

It did not ſtay to be in the way of elevation to lay the foundations of its greatneſs. Amidſt weakneſs and contempt, it propoſed to itſelf the two following maxims, *primacy in ſpirituals, and deſpotiſm in temporals.* If quick in the formation of its deſigns, it was ſlow in the execution, but herein more certain of compaſſing them; it had nothing of that ardour and impetuoſity ſo often the bane of political affairs. Whilſt other ſovereigns went precipitately

blundering

blundering on, Rome made no haſte, but walked on leiſurely; and thus effected its purpoſe.

Excommunications were the uſual weapons of the popes: this was a power they had acquired of excluding men from ſociety; and it rendered them ſo hideous, that children ran away from their fathers, wives forſook their huſbands, and ſubjects abhorred their lawful prince. Whence the popes had derived this odious privilege, which ſtamped ſuch a diſgrace on human nature, has never been known. It ſupplied the place of cannon, as in a civil ſenſe it ſlaughtered the Europeans. They whom it ſtruck could no longer return among the living, without being abſolved, and ſuch abſolution always led to ſome private end. Princes themſelves dreaded theſe excommunications more than all the military force of their enemies. There was not one ſovereign houſe on whom theſe anathemas were not diſcharged. Rome's conſtant way was to begin with negotiating and end with excommunicating. Kings, who, in their political quarrels with her, were for aſſerting their rights by arms, were ſure to be excommunicated; and this deprived them of the very means of natural defence. If a prince pretended to reaſſume the poſſeſſion of a demeſne, which had formerly been uſurped by the church, he was declared a heretic; this, at once, raiſed a general indignation againſt him, and was the firſt ſtep for weakening his power.

The abſolution of ſins committed by ſovereigns were another ſource of aggrandizement: this often was not to be obtained under the ceſſation of their prerogatives, and ſometimes even of their dominions.

Interdicts againſt nations were a fourth ſpring which its policy often put in play with great effect. Though princes ſometimes have ſhewn a contempt of them, much oftener were they frightened; and, to avert them, did what open force would never have brought them to. Though theſe weapons at length became blunted, it was not till they ſubjected to Rome ſeveral courts, who have ever ſince continued in its intereſt.

The remiſſion of crimes, a power which ſhe re-

ſerved to herſelf alone, was alſo made uſe of for the augmentation of her greatneſs. When any conſiderable uſurpation was found to tally with her intereſts, ſhe countenanced it. A pope ſolemnly promiſed a king the abſolution of all his ſins, on his making a conqueſt of England.

Rome made uſe of ſuperſtition, not only for deceiving common people, but even for impoſing on princes. Among other examples with which its hiſtory abounds, I meet with a letter which proves it to all intents and purpoſes. A pope, being in want of an army to ſave him from a Lombard King his neighbour, pretended to a correſpondence with heaven, he publiſhed a letter, which he ſaid he had received from the manſion of the deity. It was dated from Paradiſe, and written by St. Peter's own hand, to a prince, who, having a large body of good troops, was able to deliver Rome from the danger ſhe was in. Peter gives the title of excellency to this prince, though a villain and an uſurper: by this, I ſuppoſe the negotiations of heaven to be like thoſe on earth, full of adulation and ſervility to ſuch as we ſtand in need of. However it be, never was ſuch condeſcenſion and ſubmiſſion from a ſaint, when writing only to a man.

He plainly informs him that the mother of Chriſt would be exceedingly obliged to him, if he would ſide with the popes, in ſupport of their rights; and declares to him, that if he forbears ſhedding the blood of wicked mortals in the pope's cauſe, he muſt expect no place in heaven.

This letter is a contrivance which has not its equal; the obligation of God's mother to a man, a ſaint's intreaty to commit maſſacres, and all to acquire eternal glory, prove the popes, throughout all ages, to have ſtuck at nothing for gaining their ends.

Rome had ſo well tutored the Chriſtian nations to conſider her as the only deity on earth, that ſhe conceited herſelf impowered to puniſh, without meaſure, all who offended her, charging to religion what was only the effect of policy; thus ſhe ſtruck

Europe

Europe with ſuch terror, that very few Chriſtian princes dared premeditately to attempt the ſuppreſſing or curtailing her power.

We have before ſeen how ſhe ſtimulated the Chriſtian princes to engage in the croiſades; and when ſhe had brought them to her lure, then all her thoughts were to reap the benefit of their conqueſts.

This policy of the croiſades was of ſignal uſe to her; the greater part of theſe warriors diveſted themſelves of their eſtates, in favour of the church.

She farther pretended, under colour of religion, that a conqueſt made by a Chriſtian Prince over infidels belonged to her. On this ſuppoſititious right it was, that a pope required a tribute of two marks of gold from a warrior, named Alphonſo, who had taken Portugal from the Moors.

LETTER VI.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at* Paris.

Turin.

THE maxims of the European princes are utterly inconſiſtent; they would have their people virtuous, and at the ſame time do all they can to encourage thoſe vices which hinder them from being ſo.

The King of Sardinia allows games of chance; whence you may judge, to what a degree of refinement they are carried here.

At Lacedæmon theft was permitted, and in Piedmont cheating is little leſs; the ſubjects have the prince's permiſſion for it; ſo far from being a blemiſh at Turin, it is looked on as a kind of accompliſhment.

Other ſtates of Europe have their academies of ſciences; at Turin the principal academy is that of gaming, ſo that mere boys are perfectly ſkilled in this art.

To

To make the greater progreſs in it, they begin early; it is a part of Piedmonteſe education. The art of card playing is taught here as geometry in other countries. It has its rules and principles: if any one happens to be caught in cheating at play, this does not bring on him the character of a diſhoneſt man; he is looked on only as a bungler. "It is a pity, ſaid a Piedmonteſe lately, ſpeaking "of a gentleman of his acquaintance, he is a young "fellow of great honour, and would not do a dirty "thing for his life; but in tricking at play, he is "ſo miſerably aukward, that one bluſhes for him."

Here they will demonſtrate to you, that cheating at play is morally lawful. "Play, ſay theſe ca- "ſuiſts, is a traffic, therefore cunning is allowed "in it. A tradeſman has darkiſh warehouſes, "where you ſee his goods, as it were, but by "halves; and pray who goes about to ſay there is "any thing diſhoneſt in it? No, it is reckoned "ſkill in his profeſſion. And wherefore then ſhould "any other appellation be given to him who makes "the moſt at play." Such is the morality of this country; and in the religion of gaming there is not one ſingle heretic; here the Piedmonteſe, are exemplarily devout, I might even ſay, they are bigotted to it.

Moſt of the houſes in Turin are public gaming houſes, where every one is welcome for his money. Gaming is all the talk in the king's ante-chamber, as politics in that of the other European ſovereigns. The very monarch himſelf will familiarly diſcourſe of it with his ſubjects. "How has gaming turned "out with you this year? ſaid Emanuel lately to "one of his old generals, Not ſo well, Sire, ſaid "he, as uſual; your young officers are deviliſh "keen-ſighted; and as alert and circumſpect at "cards as in action, where they are to acquire glo- "ry and preferment."

Fineſſe at play is common to both ſexes, and women of the firſt rank make no ſecret of their talents this way. I heard two ladies of quality give an ac-

count of their atchievements at the card-table in the following manner. "How much may your ladyſhip "have gained by over-reaching at play this year? "A very trifle, anſwered ſhe, ſcarce twenty thou- "ſand livres. And you, lady marchioneſs, what "may your cheating amount to? I have had no "better luck than yourſelf, thirty thouſand livres "is the utmoſt. Men, continued the latter, daily "grow more difficult to be dealt with at play: love "will ſoon be the only thing in which we ſhall be "able to impoſe on them."

Cards and dice are the principal concerns here; they take up every body's thoughts by day, and their dreams by night. At Turin inſtead of ſleeping they game, even to the ruin of their conſtitutions: nature is allowed no reſpite, all the time, when they are not gaming, is looked upon as loſt.

To this folly the fair ſex ſacrifice all their other inclinations; for gaming they renounce the pleaſure of pleaſing, which was ever their leading paſſion. In other countries the women lay ſnares for the heart, but here their deſign is only on the purſe: a gentleman, who ſhould be ſo far wanting in complaiſance, as not will ngly to loſe his money, offends againſt the fudamental rules of Piedmonteſe gallantry. To carry one's point with the Turin ladies, is the beſt way to overlook their fineſſes at play, and loſe one's money with a good air.

In the other parts of Europe a woman's favour is gained by ſongs, ballads and amorous verſes. Here a lover gains his ends by overſights, miſtakes and blunders at play. A gentleman, who goes this way to work, ſhews himſelf a good proficient; it is the capital point in the art of love. Whereas, he who ſhould be ſo dull, as not to be aukward at cards, to play with attention, and commit no faults, is looked upon as a clown.

I had obſerved a certain gentleman to be always alone, neither the men ſpeaking to him, nor the women looking at him; and one day I aſked who he was. "He is a very regular man, ſaid one, "takes care of his eſtate, never plays at cards. In "a word

"a word his company is quite insupportable; ac-
"cordingly no body visits him."

LETTER VII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Prime Minister, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

FRANCE has schools for all sciences, except that of the administration. Those who are advanced to power seldom pass through any degrees. The prince's nomination must be thought to confer all the necessary knowledge, capacity, and qualifications.

I have been told of a physician who gave his gown as a legacy to a society of country physicians; and a novice putting it on, immediately becomes an adept in the medical art.

When his majesty of France appoints any subject of his to the ministry, he immediately becomes a minister, that is, able to manage the affairs of the kingdom without having ever learned any thing of the matter. One would think that herein the command of the prince was like the magical words of sorcerers, instantaneously infusing supernatural knowledge. God in the formation of the globe made use of mud, and the King of France very often makes a minister from dirt.

Here the ministry is not attained to by degrees; they who rise to it are always impelled by a rapid projection, without any sensible void between their present height, and the low station from which they were removed: and generally their flight is over the heads of assiduous, able, and honest men, whose long services intitle them to distinction.

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LETTER VIII.

The same to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE education of the Kings of Europe is incumbered with numberless troubles; they must apply themselves to learn several foreign languages at once; they are taught history, geography, and heraldry.

Governors and sub-governors are placed over them, who cram them with various knowlege, besides a crowd of masters, for forming them to all bodily graces. Such an extensive education, instead of leading princes up to the throne, misplaces them. A minor sovereign, thus diverted from the principal science, to bestow his application on so many accessories, can be little capable of governing a nation.

It is observed in general, that they who are made to learn so many things, never know any one thoroughly; the rule is the same with kings, besides its not being decent for a King to know so many useless things.

The education of sovereigns should be different from that of common men, limited to a few capital maxims, short and easily learnt; and their whole study to put them in practice.

A Chinese minister presented the following set of instructions to one of our emperors, who was but eighteen years of age; I look on it as a compendium of the art of reigning. "Fear God. Love your "subjects. Employ men of merit. Readily hearken to good advice. Lower taxes. Mitigate punishments. Explode prodigality. Set good examples. Avoid luxury. Detest vicious pleasures."

A monarch, with only this knowledge, would be

be infinitely better qualified than another, verſed in ever ſo many ſuperfluous ſciences.

LETTER IX.

Sequel of the great epochas of Europe, and of the court of Rome.

Paris.

THE popes, originally only Mandarin biſhops, made themſelves princes. This was a prelude of their future greatneſs. Names are the main point in Europe; for the people, however, averſe from complying with the will of men like themſelves, take a pride in obeying thoſe who are called princes. Thus ſuch a title, as would dazzle the eyes of the world, became neceſſary to the popes.

They collected immenſe riches, and that the ſource of wealth might be in the ſtate, they coined money: this they did, who, at firſt, preached poverty, and openly declared their kingdom not to be of this world.

Their policy ever was to make the worſhip ſubſervient to their ambition. They made uſe of religion for laying the foundations of their over-grown fortune.

It was by fixing the eyes of believers on a road to heaven of their own tracing, that they ſtripped them of the goods of the earth.

The nations were not gained over by convincing them of the truth and holineſs of Chriſt's worſhip. At Rome they believed little or nothing of what was taught. Some popes denied the being of a God, others were accuſed of dealing with the devil.

What is called at Rome the *propaganda fides*, contributed more to its elevation, than all the forces of the whole world together had to the power of the ancient commonwealth. This was the cabinet which furniſhed ambaſſadors for negociating the affair of religion with all the nations on earth. They called themſelves miſſionaries or apoſtolic men; for it has

has ever been one of Rome's conſtant maxims to erect the enormous ſtatue of its pride on the pedeſtal of abaſement. They were generals, who, only with the book of the Chriſtian faith, gained moſt advantageous victories for her.

Pagan Rome had acquired citizens all over the then known earth. Chriſtian Rome procured itſelf ſubmiſſive ſubjects throughout all the world.

Among the Europeans titles beget reſpect. To be accounted divine, it is but borrowing the name of the deity. The popes aſſumed the ſtile of ſaints, and found their account in thus dignifying themſelves.

Till then the moſt lofty monarchs of the earth required only proſtrations before them; but the more arrogant popes ordered that they who approached them ſhould kiſs their feet; and crowned heads, to the eternal diſgrace of the European thrones, were not exempted from this debaſement.

Kings had worn only one crown, and that was full enough for degrading mankind, whom nature never made for abject ſubordination. The popes would have a triple crown, indicating thereby that ſovereigns and people were to be ſubject to them.

Still one thing was wanting; a holineſs liable to miſtake and error, would have been very imperfect: hereupon they aſſumed to themſelves infallibility.

This pretenſion to infallibility was a maſterly ſtroke for the ſacred ſee. Nothing was any longer doubted of. Every thing was ſeen blindly. It facilitated the erection of another odious tribunal, called the Inquiſition, which inſpiring an awful terror in things of any concern to the papal power, was of great uſe to the popes. I know not any thing that contributed more to the conſolidation of their authority.

Chriſtian Rome had clients and emiſſaries in all the public ſchools in Europe, for ſtrengthening its authority, and theſe were continually inculcating her ſuperiority over ſecular powers. They publickly,

ly maintained that the pope's prerogatives was unlimited and abſolute both in ſpirituals and temporals. A queſtion was often diſcuſſed whether a king diſobeying a pope might not be killed; and though this maxim was not often put in practice, ſtill it heightened the papal authority.

To increaſe the number of its ſubjects, and alienate theſe of other ſtates, Rome encouraged the eccleſiaſtical profeſſion with the conveniencies and enjoyments of life; ſhe likewiſe annexed ranks, diſtinctions and honours to meanneſs itſelf. In its quarrels with temporal powers, ſhe always took care to bring in religion; and ſo artfully did ſhe interweave her concerns with thoſe of heaven, that to defend the cauſe of the pope was thought defending that of God.

Her practice ever was to divide the principal church dignities among the great men of different ſtates. She created cardinals of all nations, and theſe were ſo many popes reſiding in the different countries of Europe. Thus Chriſtian Rome had its ſee in all courts, and its court in every palace.

By her title of ſpiritual father ſhe promoted her temporal claims. As this appellation gave her a right of enquiring into the domeſtic affairs of princes, in order to an equitable determination of their differences, ſhe made uſe of it for bringing about her particular deſigns.

A very advantageous traffic ſhe carried on was in diſtributing a multitude of credentials for admiſſion into heaven; ſhe likewiſe made a great many ſaints, for ſhe had perſuaded people that ſhe had ſuch a power. This power was not maintained by a levy of ſoldiers, but by relics which were every where worſhipped: for every ſaint had a body, and every body was depoſited ſomewhere. Theſe hoſts of ſacred corſes often were known to arreſt the impetuoſity of the living; the moſt ſanguinary rage was awed into peace and ſtillneſs at the ſight of thoſe holy bones.

Rome during its hotteſt perſecutions found means to ſhelter itſelf; the aſhes of its canonized ſaints were

were a ſecure fence to it: there was not a ſtate, kingdom, province or town, which had not one or more of them; and hence it derived an univerſal ſway; for they who venerated theſe ſaints would, of courſe, reſpect the popes who had the power of making them ſuch.

LETTER X.

The ſame, to the ſame, at Pekin.

Paris.

WHEN I am for improving my acquaintance with the affairs of Europe, I repair to a private meeting, which is regularly held twice a week, at a connoiſſeur's in politics.

The other day the preſident of our council brought on the carpet three points of very great importance, He aſked, whether France ought to have concerned itſelf in the preſent German war? Whether the alliance of the houſe of Auſtria with that of Bourbon promiſed any great advantage to the latter? Where, ſuppoſing that France had been obliged to declare itſelf, the preſent war ſhould have been begun?

Hereupon a member of the aſſembly ſpoke as follows:

"The part our government has been pleaſed "to take in the affairs of the North, is a treſpaſs "againſt good policy, which required a preciſe "neutrality; there was nothing for us to get by "engaging in this war, but a deal to loſe. On "whatſoever ſide France had cauſed the ſcale to "turn, ſtill would it have been to its detriment; "for either the houſe of Auſtria, by its aſſiſtance, "would have cruſhed that of Brandenburgh, and "in this caſe ſhe would have promoted the aggran-"dizement of that houſe, than which nothing can "be more contrary to our conſtant maxims: or the "King of Pruſſia, on France's interfering in this "war,

" war, would have applied to potent allies, and " thus have overpowered the houſe of Auſtria; " in which caſe this potentate, being no longer " impeded by any barrier in the North, might " croſs the Rhine, and carry his arms againſt " France: therefore, had we only furniſhed our " quota, we ſhould have kept the ſcale even.

" England, then, would not have ſent an army " into Germany; and the ſieges and battles be- " tween the King of Pruſſia and the queen of Hun- " gary, weakening thoſe two potentates, would " conſequentially have added to our ſtrength. " When two rival houſes fall out, no aſſiſtance " ſhould be given to one, whereby it may ſoon get " the better of the other: true policy ſhould only " look on, and leave them to ruin each other."

He then proceeded to the ſecond point. " The " alliance of France with the houſe of Auſtria is a " direct ſoleciſm againſt the general ſyſtem; it is " one of your forced ſtrokes of policy, it is neither " more nor leſs than going about to unite fire and " water.

" General ſyſtems have taken place in Europe, " and ſuch are never to be overthrown by ſome par- " ticular combinations. Never will the houſe of " Bourbon heartily labour to increaſe Auſtria's " power; and as little will the houſe of Auſtria " employ itſelf in augmenting the ſtrength of that " of Bourbon."

The third queſtion he thus diſcuſſed.

" Suppoſing, added he, as has been given out, " that France could not avoid taking part in the " preſent differences, the war ſhould have begun " with England; there it was that the firſt blow " ſhould have been ſtruck.

" It was ſaid of the Romans that they were to " be conquered only at Rome; and the like has " been ſaid of ſome other nations, accounted invin- " cible.

" The experience of every age and nation has

" ſhewn

" ſhewn that a people carrying the war to diſtant
" parts, and ſtrong abroad, are generally very
" weak at home.

" The firſt ſtep ſhould have been to have gone,
" and laid ſiege to London. When a nation has
" impaired itſelf by a lethargic ſlumber of ſeveral
" ages, it has only one way of recovering, which is
" to ſtrike a ſignal blow. It has been ſaid, and
" even publiſhed in print, that to convey a French
" army over into England was utterly impractica-
" ble; but it was wrong to ſay ſo, and worſe to
" publiſh it.

" Perhaps now, that every thing is gone to
" wreck, ſuch an attempt would be found very dif-
" ficult; but at the beginning of the war it bid fair
" to ſucceed.

" When a monarchy, with ſo many reſources as
" France, centers all its views in one point, it is
" next to impoſſible, but it muſt in ſome meaſure
" ſucceed. All other ſchemes ſhould have been li-
" mitted to this, and Europe left to itſelf, till after
" this expedition.

" We had then ſomething of a navy, and the
" whole of it ought to have been employed in eſ-
" corting the flat-bottomed boats, built for carry-
" ing over the troops. Had the army made good
" its landing, no matter though the remainder of
" the French navy had gone to the bottom at once.
" Such a bold ſtroke would have ſtunned all Eng-
" land; we ſhould then at leaſt have tried a way,
" which alone could put our affairs on a good foot-
" ing. Even had we miſcarried, ſtill would the
" Britons have ever been in a panic; they know that
" they could not ſtand it long, when once France
" had opened this door. The very worſt that could
" have befallen us, was to have been then reduced
" to what we are now. As it is, our navy has been
" gradually brought to nothing; it would have been
" much better to expoſe the whole of it at once, in

" an

" an expedition by which we might have trampled
" on the necks of our moſt formidable enemy.
" When one maritime power is ſuperior to ano-
" ther, particular engagements are very detrimen-
" tal to the inferior party; it goes on ruining itſelf
" by piecemeals: whereas a general action might
" recover it in one day."

LETTER XI.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at* Paris.

Turin.

ALmoſt all the Princes of Europe have in their pay bands of muſic, as fiddlers, players on fifes, flutes, and hautboys, to keep them from the ſpleen; nay, they have buffoons to make them laugh.

The King of Sardinia is thought to have the beſt muſic, whence he is concluded to be a great prince, by having procured to himſelf a perfect harmony, which in government is a very conſiderable part of the art of ſovereignty.

There is alſo an Italian opera at his court, but I don't find that it is the beſt piece of muſic. At the French opera there is ſpeaking and no ſinging, at the Italian ſinging and no ſpeaking; a lover breaks his paſſion to his miſtreſs with only one vowel, but which he trolls about in his mouth, for a quarter of an hour together.

The Italians are ſaid to be very lively in their paſſions; whereas to me they ſeem quite phlegmatic. Were a Chineſe to beſtow ſo much time in expreſſing his ſufferings, he would die of a conſumption.

At the playhouſe in Paris one contracts diſorders which hinder one from ſleeping; and that of Turin is of a ſomniferous quality; the ſpectators have there the benefit of being as quiet as in their beds. During the three acts, of which an opera conſiſts, one

might

might take a comfortable nap, were it not for the noiſe of the *arriettas*.

For my part, to me they are quite tireſome: every body tells me the fault lies in myſelf, or rather in my organs, which are not of a delicacy to feel the charms of this muſic. What moſt offends me at this play is, to hear a female voice from the mouth of a man. I cannot help thinking it a kind of affront to the antient heroes, to make them ſing with ſuch ſhrill voices. The generals of armies have ſuch effeminate pipes, that it would be impoſſible for troops not to laugh at their word of command.

They tell me over and over that the perſonages repreſented in operas are the moſt illuſtrious men of antiquity; ſtill I take Cæſar for a woman, and Alexander for a girl. So much on this head: thou wilt ſee Italian operas in England, and then judge for thyſelf.

LETTER XII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE are people at Paris, who, for money, teach the ſcience of divination. What ſurprizes me in this wonderful ſtudy is, that its profeſſors, who boaſt that the moſt ſecret events of futurity lie open to them, are ſtarving, and obliged to impoſe on the public for a livelihood.

This is now generally held to be only an impoſture, after being for a long time accounted in Europe the only true ſcience; for the Meſſiah's religion did not diſperſe the darkneſs of human underſtanding, but left the mind as it found it. It was atheiſm, which, in the laſt century, took on it's ſelf to explode this weakneſs from the human heart: a remedy worſe than the diſeaſe.

Chriſ-

Chriſtendom was formerly full of ſorcerers, wizards, and conjurers. The courts of juſtice, conſiſting of judges, who had little of conjuration in them, took cognizance of magic, and without mercy put to death all who practiſed that myſtery. I fancy they who were above any ſuch idle notions, muſt have been highly diverted to ſee men burnt, who pretended to have a power of ſtopping the courſe of nature, and were not able to avert the effect of a faggot or two. The fire indeed did not deſtroy the wizards; they always roſe again out of the aſhes of magic.

It is not any very long time ſince the extinction of this diſtemper, which proves knowledge to have made but a ſlow progreſs in Europe.

Now this letter perhaps may not pleaſe you the leſs, if I give you here a conciſe hiſtory of witchcraft, which I have collected from ſeveral grave authors; for in Europe they write on every thing, even to the elements of folly.

Magic was divided into ſeveral branches, the natural, which was nothing but the different combinations of the developement of matter; and ſo far a man might be a magician without being a ſorcerer. A perſon who, tranſmitting the rays of the ſun through a glaſs, and thus increaſing the degree of heat, brought fruits to ripen before their natural time, was ſuppoſed to poſſeſs this ſupernatural ſcience.

The ſecond magic was derived from art; a mathematician, who by the friction of matter, produced ſounds, or made a ſtatue utter words, was reputed a magician.

The third kind of magic was medicinal; compoſitions which excited a delirium, were diſtinguiſhed by that appellation. Till then every thing in magic was natural, and to be ſuch a magician was ſufficient to be reckoned a ſorcerer; but a great abuſe ſoon followed. This ſcience was turned into fraud and impoſture. It teemed with wizards and witches,

witches, charms, ſpells and faſcinations, which turned the brains of many Europeans, and filled this part of the world with the moſt extravagant errors, conceits, and deluſions.

Some magic words were ſuppoſed to have ſuch a power as to unhinge the firmament, and change the courſe of the ſtars. Few made any queſtion but that ſorcerers often brought the moon down from heaven.

When fancy could ſupply no farther means of ſeducing human credulity, the products of nature were brought in play; and plants became magical.

Some herbs were affirmed to ſtop the tides, to dry up rivers; and others could raiſe the dead.

An impoſtor, famous in the European world by the name of Agrippa, pretended to be poſſeſſed of a magical ſecret for producing a man out of a hen's egg.

The ſorcerers not only exhibited magic on earth, but gave out that hell was concerned in a ſpecies of it. Hereupon devils were let looſe in the world, and Europe became full of demoniacs. Some wretches had no leſs than ten thouſand devils within their bodies; but the Chriſtian mandarins invented a counter-magic, ſtill more aſtoniſhing: with a few words and ſome drops of water they quickly diſlodged the devils; and ſo readily did theſe evil ſpirits yield to exorciſms, than they ſeemed to exerciſe their power only to ſhew their weakneſs.

Some ſorcerers knew every thing which was to come to paſs in the univerſe; there was only one thing hid from them, the day of their execution.

Love alſo had its ſorcerers and magicians, whoſe buſineſs was to furniſh lovers with the means of being equally beloved by their miſtreſſes. Of the wonders performed by magical rings in thoſe times, the following is a remarkable and even atteſted inſtance.

A prince was ſo enamoured with a woman as to neglect all the concerns of government; and even

on the death of his favourite the violence of his paſſion rather increaſed, ſo that he could never leave her corpſe; it appeared to him as beautiful as in the bloom of life: but a mandarin archbiſhop, laying hold of the opportunity when the prince went for ſome neceſſary purpoſe out of the room, took from her a ring in which was the love-ſpell. The monarch, on his return, ſaw his miſtreſs in her real ſtate, a fetid loathſome corpſe, and ordered it to be immediately removed; but his love attracted by the ring, turned intirely towards the archbiſhop, as its favourite object.

Sieges and battles depended on magic. Generals often uſed to concert meaſures with enchanters for defeating the enemy; this was very convenient, as a magician could ſupply the want of military force.

Beaſts likewiſe ſometimes felt the power of forcerers. An European hiſtory tells us that a people along the Weſer, being much peſtered with rats, contracted with a magician to clear the country of that miſchievous vermin. He only took a flute, and began to play on it: the rats, enchanted by his melody gathered about him wherever he went; but upon his walking into the river they heedleſly followed him, and were all drowned.

Some magicians dealt in ſtorms and tempeſts; others could confine the winds, and keep them ſhut up in aſſes hides.

For a long time a piece of wood, called a wand, acted the part of a ſorcerer with ſucceſs. The firſt uſe made of it was for diſcovering waters; but afterwards its virtue was extended to the finding things loſt, and detecting theſts and murders.

A power was attributed to magicians, which had it been real, muſt have rendered them maſters of every ſovereign's life. They were ſaid to make waxen figures, reſembling thoſe againſt whom the miſchief was intended; and on their melting their images, the living originals pined away, and died by inches.

Another

Another ſtrange effect of magic, but univerſally believed was to make men inviſible. This conjuration was of great uſe, eſpecially to lovers, who thus eluded the watchful eyes of jealouſy. It is ſaid to have occaſioned the erection of a court of inquiſition in Spain and Portugal, where ſorcerers are burnt; but this would be an unreaſonable tyranny againſt the votaries of love; an inviſible gallant, being of courſe impalpable, is little to be feared.

Beſides magicians there were alſo books of magic, and the ſorcery lay in the characters; ſo that often a printer was a ſorcerer, without knowing any thing of the matter. All theſe reveries and extravagancies were current among what the Chriſtians call the church, and received the ſanction of kings and popes; for that this folly might ſtrike the deeper root, care was taken to give it all poſſible authenticity.

LETTER XIII.

Sequel of the great Epochas of Europe, and of the Court of Rome.

Paris.

ROME laid it down for a maxim, that ſhe alone had the privilege of impoſing taxes on eccleſiaſtics, and by perſiſting in this maxim came to be believed. A count of Anjou bound himſelf to pay her annually two thouſand marks of gold, as an acknowledgment for the kingdom of Naples, on condition of being allowed to levy a tribute on the French clergy.

If a monarch happened to be ſo perverſe as to refuſe her territory which was convenient for her purpoſe, ſhe declared him a rebel to the church, and immediately ordered a croiſade againſt him. He was uſed like a Mahometan, for not having Chriſtianity enough to give up all his poſſeſſions. This

was a tyranny till then unknown in any part of the world.

This ſame court had the art of inſpiring ſuch a reſpect and veneration for its character, as to introduce abuſes both into political and civil laws; even all mankind was a ſufferer by it. A Chriſtian prince, being taken priſoner in defending his dominions, was condemned to loſe his head for having, as his ſentence expreſſed it, taken arms againſt the church: horrid injuſtice! for were the church a body politic, where was the great crime of fighting againſt it? The ſacrilege ſhould have ended, where the civil ſtate began.

Rome alſo availed herſelf of a weakneſs then common, and ſtill ſubſiſting among Chriſtian princes, though no otherwiſe to be accounted for, than that the world has always been governed by opinion. Princes had frequently the ſpirit to inſult the perſons of refractory popes, and even to dethrone, impriſon, and load them with chains; yet hiſtory ſcarce affords an inſtance of any one who ever went ſo far as to marry his niece, or diſmiſs his wife, without the pope's permiſſion. How much ſuch a notion muſt have forwarded the policy of the biſhops of Rome is obvious; as thus they were enabled to hinder any alliances which might hurt their intereſt: they either inſiſted on this power, or receded from it, juſt as it beſt ſuited their conveniency.

They have been known to debar ſome monarchs from marrying their couſins in the fourth degree; at other times, princes have been exhorted by them to divorce wives whom they had lawfully married.

After thus laying the foundation of a ſpiritual power, Rome had but one ſtep to make in eſtabliſhing its temporal authority. In imitation of the antient republic it erected a tribunal, which was to take cognizance of the affairs of the whole world. This tribunal decided the moſt important cauſes in Europe.

The popes, by their power and authority, ordered, that ſeveral kingdoms ſhould change rulers, and

and devolve to other ſovereigns. They depoſed kings without number, and conferred their crowns on whom they pleaſed; ſome were deprived of their goods and ſubſtance, and reduced to live on charity.

Rome had accumulated territories, ſo as to form a large domain. As to the means by which ſhe acquired it, the hiſtory of Europe is ſilent: the legality of her poſſeſſions reſts merely on uncertainties. One may eaſily ſee that ſhe uſurped them. We need only take a ſurvey of the ſtate of this part of the world, at the time of her making this acquiſition. All the dominions of Europe then were alienations from the Roman empire; the princes who had uſurped them, could not give away legally what was illegally obtained.

Rome cited grants from the Cæſars; but the policy of the emperors having always been to diminiſh the power of the popes, it is not at all probable that they contributed to their aggrandizement. But had they been willing it was more than they could do. They had no right to impoveriſh Europe to enrich the ſee of Rome, unleſs there be a law of nations by which a thing ſtolen, on being transferred to a third perſon, becomes a lawful acquiſition. However, the ſee of Rome continues in the peaceful enjoyment of its dominions, juſt as if it had the greateſt right in the world to them.

In peruſing the annals of Chriſtendom, you ſeldom meet with a reigning family, whom the popes have not depoſed.

This juriſdiction they have made general, and extended it even to the private tranſactions of individuals. I have read in the ſaid annals that a Chriſtian named Montfort having taking away the child of Peter, king of Arragon, the queen, its mother, went herſelf, and pleaded for the reſtitution of her child before this tribunal. Its decree was, that Montfort ſhould reſtore the child, which he accordingly did. From this ſingle paſſage ſome idea may be formed of the aſcendancy of the popes

over princes: and if the great were thus ſubmiſſive what muſt we think of the common people?

Rome not only required obedience to itſelf, but even to the meaneſt inſtrument of its power; a monk carrying an order from it, was to be reſpected.

In a religious war, one brother Ramir laid about him with excommunications and interdicts againſt whomſoever he pleaſed, without reſpect to perſons. When a king, who had been tributary to this ſee, happened to die without iſſue, ſhe claimed his crown.

She ſometimes ſeemed to give up her privileges, but it was only to ſtrengthen her authority. If ſhe made Charlemain great, it was only to curtail the power of his ſucceſſors.

A practice ſhe never departed from was, to countenance uſurpations when conducive to her deſigns.

It was to no purpoſe for princes, who preſume to conteſt with her, to ſhew the juſtneſs of their claims: the moſt ſacred laws of Europe were of no weight with Rome againſt its intereſt.

One Pepin had uſurped the crown of France; yet Rome acknowledged him as lawful ſovereign, and threatened to fulminate its anathemas againſt any who ſhould dare ſet up a king of another houſe. The motive for this was, that the uſurper had the power in his hands, and made large promiſes to Rome for favouring his uſurpation.

As it had been a ſtanding maxim with her to be the centre of politics in regard to the Chriſtian world, and this required a knowledge of every thing that was doing in Europe, ſhe kept a journal of all occurrences among princes: in order to this ſhe had agents in all courts, who interfered in every thing, and there was no tranſaction which they did not pry into. Their uſual reſidence was near ſovereigns; here they inſinuated themſelves into the inmoſt receſſes of ſtate intrigues; no ſecrets of royal

al families escaped them. They even took upon them to sift into the mystery of their beds.

They particularly endeavoured to find out the vices and virtues of princes, and to know their weak side. Rome had immediate intelligence thereof, and took its measures accordingly.

Exact accounts were sent to it of the present state of nations, their strength, the number, and condition of their troops, their systems of œconomy, and annual revenue. Thus, by means of this general correspondence, the great mandarins were acquainted with the power and situation of every political state.

These emissaries kept near the sovereign, followed him in his different journies and diversions, and even accompanied him in war: for as unforeseen events might change the course of affairs, they were determined to have the earliest intelligence, that no other power might take any advantage of them.

These agents, who are called nuncios, generally talked very big, and often threatened sovereigns, thus disciplining them into a blind submission to the popes. It was usual for them to mix the concerns of heaven with those of earth; but what still more promoted their interest, they so effectually instilled their maxims into the people, as to produce in them a greater regard to Rome than to their own country.

One part of a Roman agent's business was to prevail on sovereigns to place a confidence in his master, and the use the latter made of it was to enlarge his dominions.

No prince could rely on the fidelity of his people; on any dispute with Rome, she immediately took care to discharge the subjects from their oath of fidelity.

She fomented factions, which publickly maintained in all parts of Europe her supremacy over crowned heads; and this of course, added weight to her influence.

One article in her political ſyſtem being to keep Europe in an equilibrium of weakneſs, when any prince made a conſiderable augmentation of his forces, and his power began to give her umbrage, ſhe uſed to raiſe jealouſies in other courts, and never deſiſted till ſhe had ſet them at variance. This continual diſcord prevented any particular ſtate from becoming formidable.

Whilſt the ſeveral ſtates were deſtroying each other, Rome made uſe of maxims and arguments, which kept her ever the ſame, without impairing her power. Her only ſcope was to ſecure a ſway over the mind, well knowing that, when once the opinion of men is ſubdued, the conqueſt is compleated.

The other powers of Europe had their diſtinct point in view; their plan of dominion tended only to one object. The popes graſped at them all, their ſyſtem was the government of the univerſe.

When Europe was involved in wars, and its ſovereigns of courſe had no more forces than they neceſſarily wanted for their immediate defence, or for annoying an enemy, ſuch troubleſome junctures the popes always embraced in order to make ſome addition to their power.

They ſo far infatuated the minds of the people and of the nobility, that every body began really to believe they had an inconteſtable divine right over all earthly dominions; and on this principle it was that princes, on many occaſions, drew the ſword in their cauſe, and ruined or impaired their real power in defence of the pope's chimerical pretenſions.

If a pope had, by unlucky circumſtances, been obliged to come to diſadvantageous terms, his ſucceſſors immediately annulled the treaty; for it is a ſtanding law at Rome, that, in an act detrimental to its power, the popes are always minors: thus what they had loſt one time they were ſure of recovering another.

Rome

Rome, beſides theſe emiſſaries and agents, had bonzes and petty mandarins ſwarming in all European countries; and theſe made it a capital tenet, that all ſecular powers were only branches dependent on the Romiſh ſupremacy; a maxim, which, when admitted, muſt naturally promote a veneration for Rome, and diminiſh the zeal and fidelity of ſubjects to their overeign.

She never was known to make good her engagements but when ſome advantage was to be obtained, or, at leaſt, no prejudice could reſult from her punctuality.

Hiſtory mentions her negotiating with a prince for the inveſtiture of the kingdom of Naples, when at the ſame time ſhe had entered into engagements quite oppoſite. She always ſet up her authority to ſale; and the beſt bidder carried it.

On entering into any obligation, ſhe was ſure to inſert ſome clauſe or ſubterfuge to avoid the fulfilling of the compact.

LETTER XIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Prime Miniſter, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is no grandeur in the European governments; what they term the political power of ſtates is next to nothing.

The intereſt of princes are atoms imperceptibly minute. When I read the narratives of general battles, which have ſhaken the European world, and of legions of ſoldiers ſlaughtering each other to increaſe the power of their king, it ſeems to me like a heap of ants making a buſtle about an ear of wheat.

The conteſt for which the greateſt battles are fought in Europe, is no more than a few leagues of waſte land, which, beſides, is ſeldom of any uſe to either

either ſide; and for ſuch trifles Chriſtian princes ſpend their lives in negotiating or fighting.

The greateſt power in Europe is France, which indeed is nearly equal to one of our provinces, and has as many people as two or three of our cities put together. Its grandeur is extolled, and its ſtrength is talked of with wonder; and all this only becauſe it can raiſe an army of about as many men, as the detachment which attends our emperor when he goes a hunting.

This monarchy ſpreads its wings over the Ocean and the Mediterranean; yet inſtead of being miſtreſs of thoſe two ſeas, ſhe is inſulted on her coaſts.

It is a ſtate much diſtinguiſhed for opulence. Were its ſtock geometrically diſtributed, there would be half an ounce of ſilver for each ſubject. This is here called finances; an imaginary word, of no import in a general ſenſe, there being only a few farmers of the revenue, who are able to fine to the king.

In France the king is rich, but he is ſo becauſe every body elſe is poor. The ſubſtance of all his ſubjects he draws into his own coffers, only aſking heir leave by way of form.

The French idolize their king, and hence the firſt cauſe of their wretchedneſs. It is a family diſtemper, deſcending from father to ſon, and continued from generation to generation. Were they to be aſked the reaſon of ſuch affection, they would be at a loſs to give any other anſwer than that it is a ſettled cuſtom; not that the French nation is not fond of money, but it is more attached to its cuſtoms and manners. Here man is an animal at variance with himſelf.

The French ſpare no toil, hardſhip, or danger to get money, and on the prince's firſt order, they as chearfully part with it.

The connoiſſeurs in politics will have it, that this affection for the ſovereign conſtitutes the real power of

of the monarchy. I should think so too, were it not misapplied: to be the rule of politics, it should fix a point of proportion between the prince and the subjects, that the former might not exact too much, and the latter give too little.

LETTER XV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at Paris.*

Turin.

GAMESTERS are like lovers, they imagine people have nothing to do but to listen to their complaints.

Yesterday I was introduced into an assembly, where, on my entrance, the whole company laid hold of me, and within an hour I was made acquainted with the disasters of every member. One told me that since last year he had lost half his fortune at play; another that he knew not which way to turn himself; a third that cards had stripped him of his all.

"Gentlemen, cried a veteran gamester, you "make a great noise about your losses, but I hear "not a word of your winnings; for after all, you "do win sometimes; but that is never my good "fortune. Mind, Sir, said he, addressing himself "to me, I have played at quadrille ever since I "knew my right hand from my left, and thanks "to my age, that was before yesterday; and have "never once risen a gainer; I have not been blessed "with the sight of *spadille* these five and twenty "years. There is something very remarkable in "my ill luck. If I have a tolerable hand, and "call a king, I keep on the board. If I play *sans* "*prendre*, the game is codille. What vexes me "most is that I play with old women, who are per-"petually cheating me; in the mean time I am "beggared."

"That's

"That's drole enough, ſaid another who ſat "next to him, to complain of never having ſpa- "dille. Who the devil ever ſaw a black ace at "quadrille with the Piedmonteſe ladies?

"But, Sir, continued he, what will ſurprize "you, and was never heard of before, is, that now, "whilſt I am ſpeaking to you, I loſe quinola, tho' "with five cards of the like units. Theſe are ſtrik- "ing turns, and what may well be called events." "Talk of events! called out a third, the man is "not living who can match me for that; for in- "ſtance, here's one which has happened to me not "an hour ago, and never was the like known. To "be ſure, Sir, ſaid he, you underſtand piquet?" "Not I, Sir, I know nothing of the game." "No "matter, continued he, it is ſo plain a buſineſs "that any one may comprehend it: it was thus, "Sir.

"A hundred makes the game: I was within two, "and my adverſary wanted ſeventy-five. I have "the lead: my hand is ſix clubs, the ace, king, "queen, knave, nine, and eight, and three ſpades, "the ace, king, and queen; the ace and the king "of hearts, with the queen of diamonds; the very "tip top hand at piquet: five cards more to take "in. Two being all I wanted, my buſineſs was to "ſecure the point. I kept my ſix clubs and an ace; "but obſerve my ill luck, I take in the eight, "knave, and nine of ſpades; and the queen and "knave of hearts; the devil a diamond. I be- "lieve that inſtead of being in the ſtock, they were "ſunk into the loweſt pit of hell: no, it was not ſo "well, for my antagoniſt had them all, and diſ- "played ſeven of them on the table, and among "them a quinte to the knave, beſides a quatorze of "tens, and thus won the hundred louis we were "playing for. What ſay you to that, Sir, conti- "nued he?" "I know nothing of the game, an- "ſwered I, but it ſeems to have been ſomething "out of courſe." "Out of courſe! returned he; "after ſuch a fatality, a gentleman may even go

"and

" and hang himſelf. In five cards not to take in a " ſeven of diamonds."

" Sir, interrupted an old lady, tho' ſuch a re- " verſe be a little vexatious, yet it is only one game " loſt; but what ſay you to punting a whole night " at Pharaoh, and not win one ſingle paroli? On- " ly hear how it went with me laſt night.

" I firſt put two ducats on an ace, which, for the " ſpace of two hours, had been declared againſt the " banker. No ſooner was it on the table than " gone. I ſeconded it, and loſt four times running. " At the ſecond deal I left the ace and took the " king; the king loſt twice, and the ace won three " times; ſtill ſtuck I to the king, and thirteen " times ſucceſſively I loſt. Hereupon I changed " my card, and took the queen, which had won ſo " often; but on my making this choice it loſt, and " the king began to be the winning card. That " the queen might not hurt me ſo much as the king " had, I changed her for the knave, and the knave " loſt oftner than the king. However once I won, " and doubled my ſtake on the ten, and loſt it *ſonica*. " The nine had been declared, I took it, and the " luck turned. I heard on my right that the ban- " ker was dealing the faſs; I took it, and was im- " mediately faſſed; on my left, I was told the ſe- " cond faſs is a ſure card; I choſe it and was faſſed " again; at length, I gave over quite mad with " vexation, having loſt my all, and by a train of " events never heard of before."

" A mere trifle! dear madam, anſwered a Pied- " monteſe, who had not yet opened his mouth; " your misfortune is but a younger brother to mine. " Within theſe eighteen years, I have loſt in punt- " ing at Pharaoh, twenty-five millions of pools; " and had I not tricked the bankers, they would " have got a hundred millions from me."

LET-

LETTER XVI.

The ſame, to the Mandarin Miniſter at Pekin.

Paris.

IT is not, at once, that ſtates degenerate; they ſink into weakneſs gradually; their ſprings are not totally worn out till after a ſucceſſion of ages.

The ſecond time I was at the mock council of ſtate with which I have already acquainted you, I found the politicians who compoſe it, taken up with the preſent ſituation of France.

Every one delivering his ſentiments on this head, one of the members ſpoke to the following purpoſe:

"Gentlemen, ſaid he, an uſual miſtake among "us concerning our political affairs is, that we at- "tribute the bad condition they are in to a chain of "incidents ſucceeding each other for ſome years "paſt; whereas the real cauſe whence they are de- "rived has exiſted many ages.

"After the great revolution of our world, when "rude people became civilized nations, each par- "ticular ſtate turned its thoughts to its own diſtinct "grandeur.

"France aiming at the ſovereignty of Europe "minded only to extend its conqueſts by land, as "if it had not ſeen the ſea. The ocean made no "part of its views. The armies it raiſed to inlarge "its frontiers, and to attack all who ſhould oppoſe "its aggrandizement, were innumerable. Its plan "was adapted to the execution of its deſigns, per- "haps to the ſituation of things at that time. But "the European ſyſtem has ſince undergone a total "change.

"The numerous colonies ſent to the new world "have ſet up a power not dreamed of before; new "plantations created a wealth, of which formerly "they

" they had no idea; the produce of the mines in " America conſiderably increaſed the ſigns of value; " ſuch a large foreign trade was opened, as to be- " come the very foundation of the ſtrength of all " ſtates. Ships were then of greater ſervice than " ſoldiers; and an army leſs uſeful than a fleet. " Still France, not attending to ſo important a " change, followed its ancient ſyſtem, and receded " ſtill farther from the ſea. The diſaſter of our na- " val armaments is no new affair, nor are the de- " fects in them to be imputed to this reign or the " laſt: it is above two hundred years ſince the En- " gliſh overthrew the firſt foundations of our navy; " and that people has ever been the more ſucceſsful, " as we have never oppoſed their marine improve- " ments. So far from applying ourſelves to reſtore " the ballance, we have furniſhed them with the " means of deſtroying it. France has ſeen a great " number of laws, for ſome time paſt, enacted in " Great Britain, for the increaſe of its fleets, yet " never have our miniſtry thought of following the " example. What has been the conſequence? " Why, the Engliſh navy has, by its ſuperiority, " brought into the country ſuch an exuberance of " riches, as to ſupply our enemies with arms againſt " us: thus the maritime power has given law to " the continental."

LETTER XVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Cotzo-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

NO ſooner has a lady in France gained the prince's affections, ſo as to be taken into public favour, than all things in civil life are called by her name.

On my arrival at Paris my coachman aſked me whether I would have a pompadour coach; and a draper

draper in the ſtreet of St. Honoré, to gain my cuſtom, told me that if I would be pleaſed to let him ſerve me, he would put into my hands a moſt beautiful pompadour cloth: a cook at the ſame time, coming to make a tender of his ſervice, told me, as a proof of his abilities, that he could make excellent pompadour ragouts: there are likewiſe chimnies, looking-glaſſes, tables, ſophas, and chairs of that name.

There are alſo pompadour beds, and as I can ſcarce believe, that the French thus give names to things, without any meaning, I ſhall make ſome enquiry, whether a pompadour bed be not fixed in ſuch a manner as to give more delight to the ſenſes than any other.

There are ſhops in this city where they ſell pompadour ribbons, pompadour boxes, pompadour fans, caſes and tooth picks; every rag on a woman's toilet is now in the pompadour taſte.

This nation is ſaid to be vain, but how is this reconcileable to its ſhew of humility? Both great and ſmall have put on the favourite's livery, and ſeem to think it a vaſt honour to be dreſſed like her lacqueys: the greateſt contraſt is, that they who pay her the moſt external regard, affect to deſpiſe her the more, in their hearts. Indeed, my dear *Kitou-na*, this nation is a mere riddle; all men are inconſiſtent, but of all men the French are the moſt ſo.

LETTER XVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin of the Ceremonies, at* Pekin.

Paris.

HERE they ſtifle one another with kindneſs. If you come from the country, or you have been but a week abſent, you muſt go through the embraces, not only of thoſe with whom you have ſome connection, but even of ſuch as are ſcarce known to you.

The

The like embraces they mutually receive and pay at common visits, on new year's day, on days of condolence and congratulation, on marriages, christenings, and funerals. This nation is continually hugging, and yet heartily hate one another. I believe the French, who follow their religious tenets literally, derive this custom from the religion of Christ, who, they say, was betrayed by a kiss. Especially the women seem to copy Judas in this courtesy, embracing and ever betraying each other.

Perhaps it may be no more than a social instinct, inclining the French to make a shew of reciprocal affection, that they may bear with one another. These civilities put all on a level; after embracing each other we seem all equals.

LETTER XIX.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi, *at* Paris.

Genoa.

GENOA, from whence I write to you, is not a considerable power, but a city with the title of a republic.

I cannot conceive how the Europeans came to divide themselves into petty territories, which, thro' the vast disparity of strength, are continually liable to be subdued.

When there happens to be any difference between this republic and foreign princes, the people must rise in support of the rights of the state, a remedy worse than the disease.

A stranger is not long in getting a knowledge of the whole political strength of this government. A few trading vessels make up its navy, and two or three companies of Corsicans constitute its military establishment. Its finances are in a better condition; Genoa has a treasury, and it is on this that the Republick may be said to subsist.

Genoa

Genoa vainly attempts to figure with the principal powers of Europe, receiving and ſending ambaſſadors. It has a ſovereign called the Doge; but certainly his ſubjects muſt miſtruſt him, for on being elected he is made a ſtate-priſoner, not being allowed to ſtir without the walls of the city. His ſovereignty ends at the gates.

This ſpecies of ſovereignty is renewed every three years. The reigning prince is no ſooner ſeated on his throne, than he muſt come down and be a ſubject again.

Antiently this dignity had a crown belonging to it, but it was loſt in a revolt, ſo that now the doge of Genoa is diſtinguiſhed only by a cap.

The republic's motto is LIBERTAS; and indeed two or three hundred citizens have the liberty of tyrannizing over all the others; of making laws at pleaſure; of reſcinding them; of engroſſing dignities, ranks, and honours; of inveſting themſelves with the principal employments of the ſtate, and diſpoſing of the public revenue. It is intolerable to add deriſion to thraldom. The people in their diſtreſſes ſhould not be inſulted, their being ſlaves rather calls for pity. The motto of *liberty* can ſuit only a people governed by itſelf, or its repreſentatives; it is no farther free than as it has a ſhare in the adminiſtration, and is a branch of the national council: it is ſeldom or never that the Europeans call things by their right name. They give the appellation of republic to ſtates abſolutely deſpotical; which is juſt as much as to ſay that the Turkiſh empire is a free government.

Here the ſupreme authority is lodged in the nobles, who may form pernicious deſigns againſt the ſtate, and the body of the people not be able to oppoſe them. The ſenate often takes into deliberation matters of a deſtructive tendency; and, ſeveral times within a century, the republic has been on the eve of deſtruction by their inconſiderate behaviour.

Another

Another ſubject of public deriſion at Genoa is the ſtatue of one of their citizens, who freed the republic from a foreign yoke, but in its ſtead ſubſtituted a national one, which is always more grievous.

Beſides theſe public misfortunes relative to the ſtate, there is another which concerns the people. The ancient nobility inſiſt on a ſuperiority above the rew; hence diſputes, heats, and quarrels, in which all families are obliged to take part. It is really too much for a nation to be under the general tyranny of the nobility, without aggravating its ſufferings by their private animoſities.

A people can ſcarce bear, for any time, the ſame yoke, without endeavouring to throw it off. The Genoeſe have more than once gone about to aboliſh the deſpotiſm of the nobles; but anarchy has always proved too ſtrong for them. Two methods made uſe of by the ſtate have entirely anſwered its views: one to impoveriſh the people by monopolies, and the other to keep them at variance by particular factions.

LETTER XX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN China, ſociety is divided into two branches; the men and the women have each their diſtinct department: they meet only for the great end of propagation: this is the ſole buſineſs they have to do with one another. We Aſiatics have very little faith in the ſex's fidelity; the doctrine of our religion, in this reſpect, is the uſe of keys and bolts. Here women are confuſedly crowded together with men, and without any other guard of their virtue, than their own conſcience.

A huſband relies on his wife's chaſtity, as if ſhe was incorruptible. He leaves in her power the keys of his moſt valuable treaſure, and entirely commits his

his honour to her diſcretion. Much may be ſaid for and againſt this cuſtom; but whatever reaſon we Aſiatics could, at preſent, produce in juſtification of ourſelves, we ſhould loſe our cauſe in Europe, the women having gained theirs.

Certain it is, that this ſeparation is no inſtitute of nature, being founded only on the abuſes of the free intercourſe of the two ſexes. It is no more than a remedy enjoined by the legiſlature againſt the corruptions of ſociety; and a little reflection on the weakneſs of one ſex, and the libertiniſm of the other, muſt convince any one of its propriety, or rather neceſſity.

It is, ſay the Europeans, a tyranny: but if this tyranny calms the paſſions, heals the diſquietude of the mind, diſpels fears, maintains domeſtic peace, prevents family conteſts, promotes friendſhip and harmony; hinders the ſale or proſtitution of juſtice; obviates partiality, confuſion, and diſſenſions in the miniſtry; preſerves the general order, maintains the fundamental laws, promotes the ſecurity of the government, prevents the chief employments of the ſtate from being diſpoſed of by favour, the prince from being prepoſſeſſed, and employments from being ſold; if theſe be the effects of tyranny, it will ever be for the happineſs and honour of ſociety that men ſhould be tyrants.

You muſt own, my Chineſe friend, ſaid an European to me t'other day, that it is very cruel in you to keep your women under reſtraint, which borders on ſlavery. It muſt be allowed, my European friend, ſaid I to him, that it is very inconſiderate in you, to allow yours a liberty, which hinders yourſelves from having any. Only caſt your eyes around you, and you muſt ſee that this libert', which you ſo greatly extol, is the very image of your ſlavery. Examine into yourſelves thoroughly, and you will find that you have fallen from the prerogatives, which nature had given you over women, and that you are now become only the ſecond claſs in ſociety.

The

The ſovereignty of the woman is at preſent fixed and ſettled from the monarch to the meaneſt ſubject. The hiſtory of Europe tells us of a people called the Sauromatæ, among whom the civil authority was lodged in the weaker ſex: the French are the Sauromatæ of theſe times. The fair ſex have got the public and private government into their hands: all the affairs of the ſtate are under their cognizance. They are the *primum mobile* of the great machine of the European world. Here a woman always lurks behind a man; the Europeans are no more than automata, deriving all their action and motion from females.

What moſt diſpleaſes me in this affair is not ſo much the intercourſe of the two ſexes, as the aſcendency aſſumed by the weaker over the ſtronger; now this debaſes men to ſuch a degree, as to make them unworthy of thoſe very women, by whom they are uſed with ſuch indignity.

LETTER XXI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

SOCIETY here is ſelf-ſupported, and no body knows the mechaniſm of it. The father does not teach the ſon the duties of a citizen, for he himſelf knows nothing of the matter.

The laws are contained in large volumes, which they alone are able to read who have ſpent years in the cloſe ſtudy of an abſtruſe ſcience. To know the obligations of one's ſtation is here a particular profeſſion; few or none are acquainted with the extent of their duties.

A ſubject who has treſpaſſed againſt the police is not ſenſible that he has committed an offence, for which he is anſwerable to the ſociety he belongs to: the lawyers are to apprize him of it, and then

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it is generally too late. His ſentence follows cloſe on the commiſſion, ſo that he is often puniſhed for a crime, when he did not know he had been guilty.

Suppoſe two individuals have a proceſs: one of them has violated the laws of the ſociety, but they never know of themſelves which of the two is in the wrong. They go before a court of juſtice, where the judges canvaſs the fact, and after ſeveral ſittings declare who is in the right.

It is inconvenient to belong to a ſociety where the members are ſtrangers to the duties of their ſtation; and they who depart from them muſt be inſtructed by a hireling. This chief of duties makes no part of the general education in Europe. There is no law-catechiſm; it is only accidentally that a man here learns what a good citizen is to do and avoid. They have heard ſome body ſay they are not to kill; that murder and theft are forbidden.

Except capital crimes, which are obvious to every one, the laws of Europe may be ſaid generally to puniſh the innocent: as guilt always ſuppoſes a conſciouſneſs or knowledge of the crime.

In China the people do not ſo often depart from their duties, becauſe every body knows them. This inſtruction is a part of the Chineſe education; every member of the empire is taught to be a good citizen; the obligations of each claſs are ſpecified in the law-books; ſo that a tranſgreſſor is always guilty, as having known his duty before he failed in it. We could wiſh for the good order and eaſe of the whole world, that every nation on earth would herein follow the example of the Chineſe.

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LETTER XXII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE Opera is an immenſe country; there are people at Paris who have been travelling in it theſe forty years, and yet do not know all its avenues. I ſhall here endeavour to ſend you a geographical, or rather a muſico-graphical map of it.

It is not only mortals who appear int his ſpectacle; but celeſtial and infernal deities alſo act their part in it.

Three times a week clouds loaded with gods deſcend on the theatre, and chariots full of devils riſe from under the ſtage.

The former are natives of a country called Olympus, and they come hither to make a ſhew of themſelves to thoſe who are willing to give money for the ſight.

This Olympus probably is at no great diſtance from Paris, for the gods come from it as curiouſly frizzled and powdered as if they had juſt left their toilet. As to the devils, they alſo can have no long journey of it, for the mandarin Chriſtians affirm hell to be directly under the pit of the Opera at Paris. I don't know whether it is becauſe the muſic is infernal; for as to the devils they are very pretty fellows, and always clean ſhaved; ſo that were it not for their horns, they would be taken for friendly beings. Certainly, on Sundays, Tueſdays and Fridays, heaven and hell muſt be, as it were, empty; all the gods and demons being then got together at the Opera.

It is on them that the whole of this ſpectacle depends; it is their province to charm the company with their voice: we ſee them rule over every thing except

except colds, their god-ships being sometimes so hoarse, that there is no possibility of hearing them.

The opera has also goddesses, who are the gods wives: these female deities surprize me; for besides my never having imagined that a woman could be made a deity, I thought all the gods in the world had been old bachelors, and indeed the troubles of wedlock are unsuitable to beings who have the care and direction of the universe. Besides that, marriage always enervates more or less. Accordingly it would pity you to see these gods, they are such puny creatures. Some of them have not six ounces of flesh on all their bones; besides the thinness of their legs, which throws a shade on their dignity.

These supreme beings are most abominably lewd, hovering about some mortal's petticoats; for the European gods, like the men, have little kindness for their wives. The poor goddesses are obliged to lie alone, whilst their divine lords and masters are solacing themselves with terrestrial beauties. Formerly these infidelities provoked them excessively, and I have heard terrible instances of their revenge. Some have very nearly set all Europe in a flame: but finding that their resentment was to no purpose, they made themselves easy about the perfidious amours of their husbands; and resolved to serve them in kind, admitting handsome mortals to the honour of their embraces, so that at present Olympus is a place of universal debauchery.

The gods never fail of carrying their point with women. Indeed there is no artifice which they do not make use of for that purpose. They assume all kinds of forms, sometimes making their appearance in the attributes of their deity; sometimes like plain mortals. But when bent on succeeding, they change themselves into a shower of gold.

There is in this spectacle a devil of a god; no old baboon is more lecherous, and if he has a design on a girl, he craftily transforms himself into a fine large bird. This god, you see, knows the sex; sometimes

ſometimes he is a heifer, and when his prize gets on his back, away he flies with her.

If theſe gods are ſet on carrying off the ſpouſe even of a king or emperor, it is ſcarce poſſible to hinder it, for they have always a cloud concealed behind the ſcenes; thither they run with their lady, and mount the ſky in a trice.

The devils, who likewiſe take a fancy to the wives of mortals, carry them off with no leſs eaſe. The ſtage opens, and they deſcend into their own region with the object of their deſires. Here I ſhould rather chuſe to be a devil than a god, as there is no fear of falling.

Among the offſpring of theſe deities is a child, the archeſt wag in nature; there is no trick you can think of which he does not play at the opera, where he always acts his part. Women eſpecially have ſeverely ſmarted by his pranks. He often inſinuates himſelf into their company like a ſtrayed little boy; at other times he ſprings up among them like a muſhroom; they have not the leaſt miſtruſt of him, for did you ſee him, he looks ſo harmleſs you would ſay, butter would not melt in his mouth. It is impoſſible to forbear fondling him, ſince he is as beautiful as love himſelf; and then it is, that he wounds with imperceptible darts: after giving the wound, and ſeeing that it cauſes terrible pains, he falls a laughing, and flies away with the utmoſt rapidity.

I have ſince aſked why the managers of the Opera did not rid themſelves of this miſchievous urchin: but, I find, were it not for him, they might put the key under the door.

LETTER XXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Sin-hoei, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE are in the politics of Europe ſix important points to be ſolved; and till they are, this part of the univerſe will be always a ſcene of diviſions and wars.

The firſt problem is whether Europe would not be more powerful were it leſs ſo; that is, whether it ſhould not be reduced to its primary limits, by ſeparating it from the other large continents where, within two centuries paſt, it has made ſuch extenſive conqueſts? Aſia, Africa, and America have drained it of above twenty millions of its inhabitants; therefore it is weaker than it was; it is not by extending their boundaries, and making large deſarts, that nations grow powerful.

The ſecond is a little more knotty, viz. whether the Roman Catholic religion be not an invincible obſtacle to the acquiſition of ſtrength? or whether the papal power be not a rock on which all the temporal potentates ſplit?

The third is whether population be the ſoul of political power? This problem would no longer be ſuch, were it not that the word is commonly miſtaken; but the public almoſt always eſtimates as people what is no more than the image of people. A prince is amazed at being weak with an immenſe multitude of ſubjects; but it is for want of obſerving, that ſome people are no better than dead carcaſſes. What ſignifies a king having ſubjects, if he has not men?

In the fourth, it is aſked, whether trade of itſelf forms a power? Here the point is to know whether, in order to aggrandizement, riches are of more uſe than ſoldiers. If the examples of paſt times could be ſuch to the Europeans, the fourth problem would be

be immediately decided. The people who formerly overrun all nations prohibited trade; and the political ſyſtem of Europe is not to be thought ſo far altered, that what was formerly weakneſs ſhould be at preſent ſtrength and ſtability.

The fifth concerns navigation, whether the ſeas ſhould not be ſeparated from the earth; whether the union of thoſe two elements, be not rather detrimental than advantageous to Europe?

The ſixth, which may be conſidered as the domeſtic problem of chriſtendom, is of great moment: in cabinets it is accounted the Gordian knot of modern policy. The queſtion is to know whether the degree of power of what is here called the houſe of Bourbon, be ſuperior to that of the houſe Auſtria? The Europeans have for three centuries paſt been cutting one another's throats to clear up this political point; and after the ſlaughter of ten millions of ſubjects on both ſides, it remains as undecided as ever.

There is one method of ſolution, and that is a twenty years ſuſpenſion of arms, in which time geometrical meaſurements might be taken of theſe two houſes. But this they will, by no means, come into; as thereby the weakneſs of one of them would be brought to light, and their chief policy is to conceal it. They are under a neceſſity of diſguiſing their condition to themſelves, the better to annoy other people. Theſe two houſes are reciprocally drawing near to an equipoſe by weakening each other; ſo that ever degenerating, they will no longer wage war with mighty armies, but continue to fight even after their natural ſtrength is exhauſted.

LETTER XXIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE Chriſtian religion is very indulgent: beſides baptiſm, whereby ſouls are purified, and admitted before hand into the manſion of the bleſſed, there are other very effectual means for ſecuring a place there.

In this ſect heaven is to be gained without much trouble. Here are people who carry you thither at as cheap a rate as poſſible. Theſe are called directors; they take the care of your ſoul on themſelves, and make it their buſineſs. You are to give yourſelf no manner of concern; but do as they bid you; and their injunctions are ſo very trifling, that it is not worth while to forfeit eternal happineſs.

Nay, they oftentimes ſtrike out a way for you to paradiſe, by purſuing your pleaſures, than which nothing in the world can be more commodious. I ſhall unfold to you this myſtery of the Chriſtian religion.

Among Chriſtians it is not the evil itſelf conſtitutes guilt, but only an evil intention: ſo that it is only doing evil without ſuch an intention, and then there is no crime and you are ſafe For inſtance, only think within yourſelf, that you do not mean to offend God, but only to pleaſe yourſelf.

So far a perſon does not ſtand in need of a director, and may reach heaven by himſelf: however, it being impoſſible but that in ſinning there muſt be ſome ſmall grain of wickedneſs, this is what makes a director neceſſary. He probes the degree of malignity; but as this depends on his manner of applying the probe, it often falls out, that a ſinner is more lucky than knowing; and that he is ſtill in the path to heaven, whilſt he concluded himſelf to be above half way to hell.

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But if the director can ſave ſo eaſily, no leſs eaſily can he damn; which makes a ſort of compenſation in this religion.

Moſt actions among Chriſtians are ambiguous. They are without effect, till they who have the direction of ſouls come and give them a determination, that is, a bent towards good or evil. Now this bent is greater or leſs, according to the degree of rapidity given to it. A ſinner, ſometimes, by one ſtep farther, would ſink into hell; ſometimes, with the ſame degree of offence, he will be at a conſiderable diſtance from it; that depends on the by-ways and windings through which a ſkilful director can lead his penitent: there is a great uncertainty in the acquiſition of bliſs. A ſinner who is ſo fortunate as to alight on an eaſy director, goes to heaven on ſmooth ground; whereas he who falls into the hands of a moroſe perſon, has a very rugged road of it.

What ſayeſt thou of a religion which thus deals in mollifications for heaven, and whoſe ſuperintendants thus either widen or contract the gates of hell at pleaſure?

Let phyſicians and directors be baniſhed from all ſociety, ſay I, to the end that every man may come under a neceſſity of curing his own body and improving his ſoul.

LETTER XXV.

To the ſame at Pekin.

Paris.

ALL things, terreſtial as well as celeſtial, act their parts at the theatre of Palais-royal. The fixed ſtars glitter in their orbs; the ſun appears in its radiant dreſs; and the ſilver moon ſhines with all its nocturnal attributes. The elements have likewiſe their place in the exhibition. I have ſeen a river in veſt and breeches, booted and ſpurred, quite ready to leap into the ſaddle; the ſea

alſo is an actreſs on this ſtage, and makes its appearance, as covered with ſhips: gods and heroes are ſeen to land on the ſtage. In ſpring-tides the ocean comes up ſo far, as ſcarce to leave room for the geſticulations of the actors.

The deity preſiding over this element, riſes from under the waters like a duck, without being wetted in the leaſt. This god uſually ſings well enough. A great part of his buſineſs is to debauch beautiful mortals; when he has ſeduced them, he hurries them to his ſhips, which lie ready, and then he haſtes away to enjoy them in his watery empire. What pleaſure he finds in this is beſt known to himſelf, ſince the fruition of a mortal at the bottom of the ſea ſeems to me none of the moſt delightful; there is no purſuing him, for if he ſpeaks but a word the winds are in an uproar, and the ſeas run mountains high.

It is very often foul weather at the opera; the houſe grows dark, the ſky is all over cloudy, then comes on a rain, with hail and lightning: but the weather ſoon clears up; for, by the rules of this theatre, the greateſt tempeſt is not to laſt above five minutes.

Parts are diſtributed among the actors who are to repreſent rain, hail, lightning, and thunder; and thus they learn by heart to rain and thunder. A magician, who has all this foul weather in a wand, is to be very punctual in the diſtribution of it. Should he make it rain but two ſeconds beyond the time, it would be as much as his place is worth.

The four ſeaſons of the year are alſo introduced into the opera, and act their parts: ſpring and autumn in very ſhowy dreſſes; but of all the ſeaſons, ſummer reſides here moſt conſtantly, the heat being extremely ſultry. As to winter, it is ſcarce known; all the cold ariſes from the actors.

The dawn and broad day are ſeen there by candle-light, and at midnight the ſun ſhews himſelf. He parades about the theatre in a ſplendid car with fiery

fiery ſteeds; but, it ſeems, one of his courſers happening once to ſtumble, this reſplendent planet had a fall, which was very near breaking his neck.

You often ſee a dozen of fat-gutted winds, with their puffed cheeks agitating the air; but as they all blow at once, it is ſcarce poſſible to know how the wind is at the opera.

The zephyrs alſo are far from being excluded, particularly they are very much approved of by the ladies of quality. I have been told of a zephyr, who by the fragrancy of his breathing, charmed all the women of rank, ſo that they were not aſhamed to court his nearer approaches by languiſhing looks. A dutcheſs, who, probably, was very hot in the night-time, uſed frequently to lie with him. For ſome time he has been loſt to the public, and inſtead of being an opera-hireling, now breathes only for his pleaſure, and though, growing in years, he is ever among the ladies.

Beſides the actors, gods, goddeſſes, mortals, elements, planets, devils, and magicians, I may almoſt ſay, there is not a ſingle animal, for which ſome buſineſs is not found in the opera. It has lions, tygers, bears, elephants, rhinoceroſſes, monkies, crocodiles, &c. All theſe animals have their parts given them in writing, to which they are preciſely to conform. A lion which, with one ſtroke of its paw, could put an end to the ſtouteſt of mortals, muſt ſubmit to the ſhame of being overcome by a mere milk ſop.

Where the opera has its menagerie I know not; but it muſt be a very large building, for the theatre is full of beaſts. I have been invited beforehand, to be preſent at a fine concert of frogs, which is ſaid to be compoſed by the beſt maſter of the whole nation: but being informed, that there is ſcarce any of thoſe frogs, who is not near five feet high, they ſhall not have my company; for frogs of ſuch a ſize, inſtead of diverting, muſt deafen one. The elephants and lions, however, muſt be very ration. l

creatures, each having in its belly a human ſoul. To this ſinging opera is joined another of the dancing kind, where the actors, inſtead of ſpeaking, expreſs themſelves by gambols and antic tricks. Olympus and hell often dance together. In the want of devils furies are employed, and when theſe fall ſhort, they are ſupplied by Italians. Almoſt every ſcene of the opera concludes with a dance, and after every act comes a ballette.

The dancing tribe worſhip a deity called *Caper:* an ungrateful deity which, for all the ſacrifices, troubles, and labours of its votaries, generally rewards them only with a crutch.

LETTER XXVI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE are at preſent in Europe five great powers at variance. Of theſe, four fight battles by their generals, and conduct the war in their cloſets.

L—s goes a hunting when his troops are marching to join his army. F—s betakes himſelf to his cloſet when his ſoldiers are taking the field. G—e ſets out for Kenſington when his regiments are on their way for Graveſend. E—h gives order for her fleet to be got ready for Moſcow, when her armies are preparing for Germany. Frederic is the only one who makes war in perſon.

This monarch is, by the greater part of the Europeans, accounted a moſt glorious prince, and that becauſe he has ſeveral times ſtaked all he is worth on a card, and often played ſweep-ſtakes: he is the more admired for his compoſure on a day of battle; and finding leiſure for blowing an hour together in a wooden tube, which the Europeans call a flute. All I ſhall ſay about this ſymphony, which

is

is ſoon followed by the rattle of the cannon, is that, among friends, I believe there is a great deal of vanity in it; and that if he plays on the flute ſuch a day, it is to be talked of by poſterity.

Some, however, affirm, that he is not ſo raſh as he ſeems: it is ſaid that the preſent war is the reſult of the deepeſt political meditations, and that before unſheathing the ſword he had geometrically meaſured the power of each of his enemies, and minutely calculated their degree of ſtrength and their reſources. What is ſtill better, ſome will have it, that he took a ſurvey of the moral ſtate of Europe, and that ſeeing only princes without genius, capacity, and experience, given up to their pleaſures, and immerſed in luxury and ſoftneſs, he had compared his forces with ſuch weakneſs. If ſo, Frederic is a great king; but if a fondneſs for making a noiſe in the world be his motive, Frederic is the moſt imprudent of men.

LETTER XXVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Cotao-yu-ſe *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE beauty of women in France is wound up every morning like a pendulum, as if their charms were clock-work: it is a flower which ſprings up and dies in a day. The ſex's firſt occupation, on riſing, is to repair the depradations committed on yeſterday's face. Theſe repairs are made before a counſellor, who points out the places moſt damaged, and guides the hand in refitting them: it is a long winded buſineſs, and runs away with a great part of the morning, before a woman's face is recovered from yeſterday's confuſion, and every charm arranged in its place. The firſt dreſſings of beauty are laid on with the cloſeſt privacy; for a woman would be ruined ſhould ſhe be caught in a morning with the face ſhe roſe in.

This repair of her charms is performed by ablutions, aſperſions, immerſions, waſhings, and rubbings: theſe operations are only the preparatives to beauty. She proceeds to remove a livid paleneſs, and to diſlodge a ſallow complexion; now pomatum is called in for the lips, powder for the teeth; then come the ſponges, bruſhes, pickers; and theſe are ſucceeded by waters, eſſences, perfumes, &c.

Each of theſe drugs and tools are appropriated to ſome particular uſe: for a complexion is to be made, the ſkin to be whitened, the marks of time time to be effaced, the forehead to be ſmoothed, the eyebrows to be ſettled, a luſtre to be given to the eyes, a fine bloom to the cheeks, a ruddineſs to the lips, &c. In a word, the whole face muſt be taken to pieces, and then made as new as if it had never been worn.

LETTER XXVIII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi *at* Paris.

Genoa.

THE Genoeſe, inſtead of ſpeaking, whiſtle: to converſe with them, one had need underſtand the language of birds.

Every province, every city in Italy, has its idiom, and this idiom is underſtood by the reſpective inhabitants; but of all the people whom ſtrangers do no not underſtand, the moſt unintelligible are the Genoeſe.

The profeſſors of European languages ſay, that one day the Genoeſe will talk a great deal, having before-hand laid up a large ſtock of words; for ſince theſe two thouſand years that they have been muttering, they eat half their words.

Every thing among this people is mean, except their buildings. Amidſt the magnificence of their marble ſtructures you ſee mean individuals buried, as it were, in their abjection; a gloomy and diſmal appearance ſpreads itſelf through all this ſplendor of

of palaces. All the inhabitants, men and women, are dreſſed in black, from head to foot. It is a ſaying, among the Italian wits, that the Genoeſe are in mourning for their honeſty.

The very nobles of this republic have ſomething ſneaking in their looks; and the little ſilk cloak on their ſhoulder is ſo ſhort and narrow, that ſome have not been wanting to infer from hence, that their minds were too contracted to make great politicians or wiſe magiſtrates.

LETTER XXIX.

Sequel of the great Epochas of Europe.

Paris.

I Muſt make you acquainted with the creation of the new Chriſtian republic.

In the ſixteenth and ſeventeenth century the face of Europe was entirely altered. The people who made moſt noiſe in this part of the globe, had ſunk of themſelves. A general revolution happened on the theatre of the Chriſtian world. The nations who were behind the ſcenes of Europe had taken the place of thoſe who, for a long time, had acted a capital part.

The Normans had not been heard of for a long time. The Saxons and Danes were now become ſo inconſiderable as to have no farther ſhare in the important affairs of the Chriſtian republic, than by the influence which the great nations were pleaſed to give it; and theſe potent nations were ſuch as formerly had made the leaſt figure.

The fortune of the Houſe of Auſtria was aſtoniſhing. Never had any ſovereignty on the earth been known to ſwallow up ſo many kingdoms; nor a petty power to raiſe itſelf in ſo ſhort a time, and, as it were, from nothing, to the very ſummit of human grandeur: it may farther be affirmed, that, had not a chain of ſecond cauſes checked the impetuoſity of its

its ambition, all Europe would have been ſubject to that family.

France, which, in the opinion of the antient annaliſts, had been deſtined to perpetual abaſement, roſe ſtill higher. Its Kings were formerly ſo inſignificant, that it could never have been thought they would be the inſtruments of its grandeur: this was owing to their having ſhaken off the ſervile yoke, under which they had been long held by the mayors of the palace. They had no ſooner been informed by their miniſters, that the crown gave them a prerogative and power, than they were for making uſe of it. The work of aggrandizement, however, went on but ſlowly. Several ages elapſed before the French monarchs could be brought to believe that they could do what they pleaſed.

The firſt who formed the plan of rouſing the monarchy from its long lethargy, was Francis I. but he rather formed his plan than carried it into execution; and a great matter was it to France that ever he formed it. In my opinion, the elevation which this monarchy ſince attained to, is owing to that prince. The chief point is the model: the difficulty is to ſtrike out a plan of aggrandizement; when this is once formed, the execution generally follows.

Henry IV. who was called the Great, perhaps becauſe Francis I. had been ſo, worked on the materials which he found ready to his hand, and made this monarchy appear in another light.

Lewis XIII. having employed intriguing miniſters, put the French power in motion, and Lewis XIV. fixed it. Some, however, ſay that this prince did it no ſmall hurt; I believe ſo too: but the firſt foundations of its greatneſs were laid, and all the ſprings of adminiſtration had been ſet a-going. It was not poſſible for him to demoliſh a work, which his predeceſſors and he himſelf had at firſt contributed to erect. If he lowered ſome parts of the throne, he raiſed others. He conſiderably increaſed the dominion of the crown of France by his conqueſts,

queſts, or by his uſurpations, ſo as to make this monarchy the firſt power in Europe, both in extent and number of inhabitants. The houſe of Auſtria alone came in competition with its power, and often the balance was on the ſide of France.

Whilſt this monarchy was in motion, that of England was alſo in action, and the aggrandizement of France put Great Britain on endeavouring at elevation: for theſe two neighbouring ſtates have ever been rivals, and conſequently jealous of each other's power.

Hiſtory does not afford one inſtance of ſo inconſiderable a nation carrying its fortune to a higher pitch, without going beyond the narrow compaſs of a ſmall iſland. I have found out the reaſon. All other ſtates have neglected themſelves, whilſt England conſtantly kept an eye on its intereſt. It entered into meaſures, which diſtinguiſhed it from other nations.

Henry VIII. of England is conſidered as a prince of little thought; yet he did one very wiſe thing, namely, the aboliſhing a claſs of men, whoſe only profeſſion was to pray: and thus he reſtored vigour to his kingdom, which, by the loſs of ſuch a number of hands was, as it were, deprived of the uſe of many of its limbs. This ſtep was alſo of a very happy conſequence; it brought into the political ſtate a wealth, which, when ſeparated from it, cramped its power.

But theſe were only eſſays towards greatneſs; the finiſhing hand was ſtill wanting. A tyrant * ſtepped forth, and paved the way to that degree of elevation which it afterwards attained to. It is difficult to form an idea of an ambitious individual, bringing his ſovereign to the ſcaffold, and at the ſame time giving life to his countrymen; with one arm overthrowing the monarchy, and with the other raiſing the nation: an uſurper, who eſtabliſhed a power by deſtroying the conſtitution. Since this even

* Probably he means Cromwell.

event England has been the third kingdom in Europe.

Ruſſia, which, ever ſince the creation of the univerſe, had ſcarce been known in Europe, roſe at once to a conſiderable influence in the general republic. By one man alone, it emerged from the abject condition in which it had ſtagnated. Peter, (for ſo this wonderful man was called) may be ſaid to have created Muſcovy. This revolution raiſed it to be the fourth power; and with a ſecond Peter, it would be the firſt.

Spain, which for a long time had been buried in a rock, iſſued out from thence, and ſettling in its own country, drove away thoſe who had forced it to bury itſelf under the ruins of the throne. Some European politicians ſay, that ſhe was in the wrong to rid herſelf of her enemies; that ſhe ought to have kept them, had it been only for population: and perhaps they are in the right, ſince it is better to reign over foreigners than over deſert lands. On the diſcovery of the new world, this monarchy became enormouſly rich, and to the very ſame thing it is owing that, at preſent, its power is ſo inconſiderable; however, it is now reckoned the fifth in the republic of the Chriſtian world.

Holland, which had never been heard of, came into exiſtence, and ſtarted up from under the waters: ſome fugitive people ſet up a petty republic, which ſoon proved a match for puiſſant monarchs. Its birth was owing to fear and deſpair; and it may be ſaid to have been formed by the hands of revenge. Tyranny (to which Europe is not a little obliged, becauſe the people in ſhunning it, have often laid the foundation of the moſt powerful ſtates) gave it birth: having been perſecuted by kings, it deteſted monarchy: every man of any ſubſtance had a ſhare in the government, and this bound every one to it; but each conſidered the country as his general family, and the government as the father of each particular houſhold. Toleration in religion promoted

moted population, and the believers of different ſects looked on one another as brethren.

This handful of refugees formed the third power of Europe, ſometimes the ſecond; and there have been ſhort intervals, when it was the firſt.

Italy followed at a diſtance the progreſſion of the new European power; its ſuperſtition, ever the ſame, excluding it from political greatneſs. Venice and Genoa made a little noiſe for ſome centuries; but after ſeveral efforts, relapſed into their primitive debility. One royal houſe alone diſtinguiſhed itſelf, ſo as to take its place among the principal powers; but its degree of force is ſcarce determinable, as almoſt always depending on time and circumſtances.

LETTER XXX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin of Arts and Trades at* Pekin.

Paris.

FRANCE abounds in arts and handicrafts. It is the country of manufactures: the kingdom may be ſaid to be overſtocked with ſtuffs and other productions of their artificers. Every body here is ſo taken up with form, that matter is not thought of. Night and day they are beating their brains about varying the productions. All this trouble does not proceed from the people, who ſeldom conceit themſelves ſo ingenious: the origin of it is derived from no leſs a place than the court, which is ſeized with this faſhionable madneſs.

Every article of a luxurious tendency is encouraged; and the principal regard is ſhewn to the trades promotive of pomp and ſhew. They are ſo taken up with ſuperfluity, as to have no time to think on what is neceſſary. This kingdom is really an univerſal warehouſe of manufactures. France has wherewith to cloath ten generations; but not to feed one. Artiſts run away with rewards and honours;

nours; whilſt toil and trouble are the portion of workmen. There are ſo many artiſans in the town that hands muſt be ſcarce in the country; for it is from thence that the whole claſs of manufacturers muſt come. Yet the ſtateſmen of this country ſtir up this emulation, to the very great prejudice of that which ſhould take the lead of all other profeſſions.

LETTER XXXI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-touna, *at Pekin.*

Paris.

THE king of France has too many kingdoms. Either the monarchy ſhould be leſs, or the monarch greater. As he cannot inſpect into the concerns of the extremities of his empire, he is under a neceſſity of ſubſtituting petty ſovereigns, called governors of provinces. Theſe are properly the French Pachas; only they are more abſolute than the Grand Turk himſelf. Their power is great, beyond all reaſon and equity. Not but it is ſubordinate to the king's authority, theſe governors being only the royal factors; and the people may complain to the throne of their oppreſſions: but beſides complaining to no purpoſe, it would be the ready way utterly to ruin themſelves; for the governor would infallibly take a very ſevere revenge on all ſuch complaints.

This the people know, and accordingly chuſe rather to ſuffer than murmur.

One would think the King of France had no other ſubjects than the inhabitants of Paris, and that they who live at a diſtance from his court are foreigners, about whom he does not give himſelf any concern.

The other day I was ſhewn one of theſe provincial kings, whoſe realm lies near the ſea of Marſeilles.

This monarch commands his ſubjects to be vicious.

Any

Any young man inclined to commit the moſt ſcandalous debauchery, is furniſhed with the means even in the royal reſidence; the king himſelf ſeduces and ſuborns them.

There is a law in France againſt all games of chance; and he, inſtead of watching over the obſervance of it, is the firſt to break it. There is public gaming in his houſe from morning to night.

The city, where he uſually reſides, is ruined and undone: all the heads of families are under the greateſt concern, having no longer any authority over their children. They recommend diſcretion and frugality to them, but the governor countenances diſſipation and prodigality. Great is the power of vice, when authorized by thoſe who ſhould ſuppreſs it.

The Roman empire owed its downfal to the tyranny of thoſe who were intruſted with the command of diſtant provinces; and ſuch will be the fate of France, the governors of provinces abuſing the power with which they are entruſted by the king.

LETTER XXXII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi, *at* Paris.

Genoa.

THERE is an animal here of which we Aſiatics have no idea, and never was it heard of in Africa or America. In the country language it is called a Ciciſbeo.

It is a man without any other buſineſs than to be continually dangling after a woman, who does not belong to him; he is to prance about with her from morning to night; he takes the lady at her getting out of bed, and never leaves her till ſhe retires to reſt; and this is allowed of by the huſband, and authorized by the public.

It

It would be a tedious buſineſs to make you underſtand the nature of this Ciciſbeo: I own it is what I cannot comprehend myſelf; for that there is a ſociety on earth, where the general depravation is come to ſuch a pitch, that married women ſhall openly become proſtitutes, and huſbands as openly diſgrace themſelves, is what I can, by no means, think. Yet I aſſure you that there are ſuch creatures as Ciciſbeos at Genoa, that wives accept of them, and that they are tolerated by huſbands. Nay, it is generally the huſbands who nominate to this function, and who preſent them to their wives the very day after their marriage.

At firſt, I conceived the Ciciſbeos to be eunuchs, but the fecundity of the Genoeſe ladies proves the contrary, unleſs this ſpecies of eunuchs have a generative privilege. I have even heard that one of the principal qualifications to be a Ciciſbeo is virility.

The excuſe for this cuſtom is, that the Genoeſe huſbands have ſuch a confidence in their wives as not to ſuſpect them capable of infidelity; but women's morals do not take their turn from men's way of thinking. In all countries the ſex is frail; wherever ſeducements offer, the women eaſily yield.

It would, ſurely, in the preſent ſtate of human frailty, be ſomething very ſingular, that men and women ſhould be continually together, have all the means and opportunities of corrupting each other, and yet forbear. The intercourſe between the two ſexes is a ſentimental commerce, and of all ſentiments pleaſure is the keeneſt, and that which is leaſt reſiſted.

Such a licence, I apprehend, muſt ariſe from the contempt of women, and the diſguſt annexed to the connubial ſtate. A huſband hears no more of his wife, is not obliged to have an eye to her behaviour, to follow her, attend on her, bear with her freaks, caprices, and extravagances: all this is diſcharged on the Ciciſbeo.

A people

A people muſt have been very corrupt to adopt ſuch cuſtoms.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin Superintendant of Religion, at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE Chriſtian religion is ſo far good, as tending to make thoſe who practice it, juſt and honeſt. It teaches that there is a God, Creator of heaven and earth, who will reward men according to their virtues, and will puniſh them according to their vices.

What appears to me ſomething contradictory is, that the Supreme Being ſhould have become man to give a right turn to a handful of mud, which he himſelf had brought into exiſtence; have gone and placed himſelf in the impure nature of a woman, in order to purify mankind; have conſented to make a breach in eternity to begin life; and have terminated this life ignominiouſly on a gibbet between two robbers. Theſe are humiliations quite contrary to the ſublime idea entertained of the Supreme Being, by all the nations in the univerſe.

But it is not for us mean mortals to penetrate into the ſecret abyſſes of the eternal; if ſuch was God's pleaſure, it was impoſſible for it to have been otherwiſe. I cannot, however, help being concerned that the whole earth was not included in his plan of reſurrection. For though the Chriſtians ſay that their Meſſiah ſent Ambaſſadors to all the nations in the world, to inform them that he had died for their ſakes, this ſeems to me going a little too far, the gates of the univerſe not being then thrown open.

We, at leaſt, who have in all ages kept exact records of the great events of heaven and earth, do not find a ſingle word in our archives, that any of theſe Ambaſſadors of Chriſt came to China. If any were ever ſent, in all likelihood, they died by the way.

way. I would not, however, quarrel with the followers of the Meſſiah on all theſe points of their religion, how myſtical ſoever: but what gives me the greateſt diſlike to them is their opinion, that let all the other nations of the earth do all the good they poſſibly can, it does not bring them a ſtep nearer to heaven; and that becauſe the Chineſe, the Indians, and Japaneſe, do not believe that Chriſt ever died, they ſhall die for ever *.

LETTER XXXIV.

The ſame, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN France genius is ſold; here are tradeſmen with ſhops full of wit, which they diſtribute, in ſmall meaſures, made in the ſhape of Books; they ſell it out by retail to the public, and endeavour to make the moſt of it: theſe trades-people are called Bookſellers. There is this difference between the dealers in ſtuffs and the wit-mongers, that the former are acquainted with what they ſell, whereas the latter know nothing of their goods.

In this diſtribution of genius, the Bookſellers are ſo diſintereſted as to keep none for themſelves. Accordingly, in the whole republic, there is not ſuch a ſet of ignoramuſes. The height of their knowledge is the crowding up their memory with title-pages. He who can cram the moſt in it, is reckoned the beſt man.

There is another qualification in their trade, but the attainment of it being ſomething difficult, moſt of them give themſelves little trouble about it. It is to know the names of the authors whoſe works they have, and to be punctually acquainted with the anniverſary of the editions of books which expired at their birth, and of others which, at ſeveral times after their death, have been raiſed to life.

The main point of the profeſſion is catalogues, or

* The Chineſe Spy ſeems here to make Hell an eternal Death.

or a general inventory of their intellectual commodities, ſo that the buyers may at once ſee the kinds of genius which they would furniſh themſelves with, and the expence of their intended acquiſition.

With all the natural avidity of Bookſellers in point of gain, they are ſometimes exceeding reaſonable. Some are ſo eaſy as to ſell you two pennyworth of aſtronomy, in a little book called an Almanack, and a moſt convenient compoſition; for then you have rain and fair weather in your pocket.

The dealers in genius who have the beſt goods, are ſo far from having the moſt cuſtom, that they generally fail, or, at beſt, die in low circumſtances. In this branch of trade, nothing ſells but tinſel-wit, ribaldry and traſh; the red, blue and green books, romances, adventures, memoirs and letters.

There is another way, which thoſe, who are in haſte for a brilliant fortune, never fail of taking; I mean the ſale of obſcene books, to the depravation both of taſte and manners; as *Portier*, *Thereſe*, *la Pucelle*, and other profligate and impious pieces. Many Bookſellers have felt the ſweets of dealing in thoſe articles.

But there is a way ſtill ſhorter, that of atheiſtical books: a Bookſeller whoſe ſhop is noted for writings againſt the exiſtence of a God, proves, thereby, that he is no atheiſt himſelf, and that he believes in a deity, which is money.

Theſe Bookſellers are continually at war with authors, utterly deſpiſing them as dull and ignorant. Such ingratitude! it is theſe very dull and ignorant authors who put bread in their mouths. Did only men of learning write, they would ſtarve

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LETTER XXXV.

The Mandarin Champi-pi, *to the Superintendant of Religion, at* Pekin.

Paris.

CHRISTIANS believe only in one God, but they adore multitudes of idols. This ſect builds no altars to monkeys and crocodiles, but it erects them to images and ſtatues.

Here are ſome idols held in greater veneration than Chriſt himſelf; they are called *ſaints*, and are made up of the bones of dead bodies, the ſouls of which, ſay they, are at preſent in heaven; they are laid in ſhrines of gold, ſilver, marble and porphyry, and placed in ſplendid niches, over altars ſhining with every kind of magnificence. There incenſe is burnt to them in the day, and wax-tapers at night.

Theſe rotten bones muſt, for the honour of the ſhrine, have performed ſome miracles; that is, they muſt have changed the courſe of nature. And theſe miracles are recorded in a regiſter called, the book of lies.

Theſe ſacred carcaſes are only ſkin and bones; and tho' they daily perform miracles, they have never been able to keep two ounces of fleſh on their bodies. The greater part are maimed; one wants an arm, another a leg, a whole body is ſeldom to be met with. Of ſome only the head is remaining, or a hand, or finger; however the veneration is ſtill the ſame, for in ſaints, a part is always conſidered as the whole.

I have been told of a convent of bonzes in a city of this kingdom, which has only a ſaint's toe-nail, but it is of ſuch reputation, that multitudes of Chriſtians leave the country where there are ſaints ſix feet high, to go and worſhip his toe-nail.

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LETTER XXXVI.

To the same at Pekin.

Paris.

IT is not God who makes the saints, but the Pope. The apotheosis, or canonization, as it is called here, is sold; a place may be bought in heaven, like an employment on earth; but an inrolment in the book of canonization runs high, so that none, but very ambitious saints will be at the expence; and if this sum be wanting, the corpse remains a corpse instead of being promoted to the dignity of a saint; and several, for want of the purchase money, lose their title to a nich.

There are also demi-saints, who are called *beati*, or blessed; and having given but half the sum, are allowed only to perform half miracles; should they take it into their heads to raise the dead, they would be stopped in their career, as interfering in a thing out of their verge. This police of miracles is absolutely necessary, otherwise the demi-saints would assume to themselves all the honours of heaven; and thus supplant those who had paid the full purchase-money for a compleat saintship.

A saint's business is to intercede with God; they are pleading counsellors in heaven.

Besides these idols, which formerly had dwelled in a body, there are some which never had a soul; these are of wood, stone, marble, gold, or silver, according to the wealth and devotion of the place where they were made. All these are not productions of the chissel, some owe their existence to the pencil. This difference occasions none in the worship; a piece of painted canvas shall often have more veneration paid to it than a sculptured block of marble. To tell thee how such things came to be dignified with celestial applications, and a rag or the stem of a tree to be made a deity, is a mystery to be accounted for only by Christian Mandarins.

Altars

Altars are erected and even temples dedicated, to copied idols equally as to originals. All of them have not a pagod, but they are all in pagods, where they have their niches, and are venerated according to their miracles; for these stems of trees, and pieces of canvas, likewise deal in miracles. There are some images, which would not yield a jot to the whole body of the most wonder-working saint.

These idols are magnificently lodged, and still better lighted. They would, however, see much clearer in their niches, had not the late King ordered a great number of lamps, which used to burn before their altars all day, to be removed, saying, that they might be satisfied with the light of the sun as well as he.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the same at Pekin.

Paris.

THE number of these idols is daily encreasing; surely nothing was ever comparable to the propagation of the idol of the virgin. It is to be presumed, that at the time of Christ's nativity there was only one, and, at present, there are known to be some millions. Christians worship eleven thousand *in the lump*; there are now idols of every nation and climate, brown, fair, and black.

These idols have virtues of all kinds, and perform all kinds of miracles. One would think there was a college of physicians in heaven, where the saints take their degrees; for the Christians apply to them under every distemper. Some implore them to get rid of the gout, others of the fever, others of the gravel, others again beg to be cured of the retention of urine; each has his department, and limits himself to a particular branch of physic. The physicians, whose patients are thus continually decreasing, have often been for suppressing their

their practice as empirics, who only impoſed on the public; and have inſiſted on their taking a doctor's degree. They ſeem alſo to have a profound ſkill in navigation, at leaſt moſt of them muſt have been pilots. A great number of ſea-faring people conſult about voyages.

That they are in connection with thieves is not to be queſtioned; for they are prayed not only to prevent theſts, but even for the recovery of ſtolen goods.

All theſe ſaints have not the ſame uniform, each of them make a different appearance. Some are ſtark-naked, others but half cloathed; ſome in a night-cap; ſome with croſſes and palm-branches, others with ſwords and ſabres; ſome with gridirons, others with knives; ſome with bare helmets, others with plumes; ſome with long beards, others with not a ſingle hair on their chin; ſome with croſiers, others with mitres; ſome on horſeback; ſome mere dwarfs, and others of a gigantic ſize, &c.

Theſe idols are placed in the pagods according to their antiquity. The idol Peter, takes the hand of the idol of John, and the like others. Among theſe are twelve, who are inveſted with a pre-eminence, and hold their altars by right of antiquity.

Though the claſs of idols be generally rich, they are not all equally ſo: this depends on the degree of veneration paid to them; for theſe deities, like us poor mortals, are not exempt from the caprices of fortune. The altars of ſome look like ſo many jewellers ſhops, whilſt at others you ſee only a parcel of old crutches, and ſome ruſty locks of hair.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the same, at* Pekin.

Paris.

AFTER the representative idols come those called reliqus. These are boxes or shrins containing old rags, formerly part of the saints apparel. Many a saint has left old cloaths enough to make two or three hundred relics; and would you think that there are not a few Christians among whom these rags are of greater weight than all the mysteries of their religion.

The instruments made use of in the sufferings of the person whom the Christians stile their Redeemer, are, especially an inexhaustible store of reliqus. To judge by the quantity of the thorns said to have made a part of the mock-crown placed on his head, it must have been of a most enormous size. He is said to have been bound on a cross, and his hands fixed to it with large nails; if so, God incarnate had more hands than arms; above a hundred of these nails being now shewn, and all averred to be genuine. His cross, by a computation I have made, must have been bigger than the three masts of a large ship put together; for the pieces of it remaining among the Christians make above ten thousand reliqus.

Though every thing in nature perishes, this wood retains its soundness. For these eighteen hundred years past it always look'd as if quite new. Indeed to preserve it from rotting, care is taken to change it from time to time; and this is the miracle which constitutes its incorruptibility.

The sponge (another attribute of this mystery) is extremely swelled, and is become divided into so many little particles, so that all the strength of man could not squeeze them into a middling room.

The

The three dice (another attribute in that great event) are alſo multiplied to ſuch a degree, as if the greater part of Chriſtians thought the whole of this myſtery to be no more than a game.

Inſtead of the one lantern, which was alſo one of the inſtruments of this tranſaction, they have now ſeveral; but the enemies of this religion give out, that Chriſtians don't ſee a bit clearer for that: nay, they will have it that ſo many lanterns dim the ſight. According to theſe people, Chriſt muſt have had very copious ſweats after his death, for they have no leſs than ſix conſecrated handkerchiefs.

So much for the wretched imbecillity of the Europeans. When nations are ſuperſtitious to ſuch a degree of folly, this ſufficiently accounts for all their other extravagancies.

LETTER XXXIX.

The ſame, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN Europe vanity thruſts itſelf every where; the aliments are an article of parade, and rottenneſs itſelf is converted to luxury. So very vain and arrogant are the people of this country, that the table is become an affair of importance. The French eat from parade, and digeſt from oſtentation.

The luxury of their table is here divided into ſeveral ſervices, and inſtead of one meal they make four. About a month ago I dined with a great man in the city of Paris, who has not the character of one of the moſt liberal; however at firſt came in the ſoup, with the bouilli and by-diſhes; after feeding heartily on this, the remains were taken away, and ſucceeded by the ragouts; this was followed by the third, conſiſting of roaſted meats, particularly all ſorts of game. The company was ready

dy to burſt with guttling, when in came a fourth dinner of fricaſees, kickſhaws and fruits.

To analyze the courſes of a French table, I would ſay that the firſt is for neceſſity, the ſecond for ſuperfluity, the third for magnificence, and the fourth for vanity.

A man with only one ſtomach is obliged to many digeſtions; he muſt digeſt both for fat and lean; his ſtomach works both for cold and hot, labours for the raw and for the dreſſed meat; ſuffers for oil and for vinegar, for the ſweet and the ſour, for ſallads and for creams. What a miſh maſh! yet all theſe things are ſwallowed down at the ſame meal.

To this ſumptuouſneſs of meats, the French formerly added that of getting drunk; but this branch of magnificence they have turned over to the Germans; ſo that now all the carouſing at Paris is mere bravado.

The vanity of the table can hardly be exceeded. A few days ago I was invited to ſup with a rich financier, who has contracted an affectation of delicacy and refined taſte, which he carries to great exceſs.

The company having gone through the three meals of the firſt courſes, the maſter of the feaſt deſiring us to riſe, led us into another apartment, where a fourth exhibition ſtood ready: this was an artifical wood, on a table, with large trees, where fruits of all the ſeaſons offered themſelves; and from this foreſt iſſued a concert of nightingales.

This ſame financier has contrived deſſerts in the way of fireworks, which have been executed with great applauſe at his evening repaſts.

It is thought this luxury will not ſtick here, but be carried to higher degrees of magnificence.

It is already rumoured, that a nobleman, well ſkilled in entertainments, intends to give an act of the Italian comedy in fruits; and Harlequin and Scapin are to perform pantomime ſcenes. Another, ſtill more elegant, propoſes to exhibit the whole French opera in a deſſert; for this I believe would

be

be moſt proper, ſince of itſelf it is very cold. When a government has no ſumptuary laws, ſuch national follies are no more than what muſt be expected.

LETTER XL.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at* Paris.

Genoa.

THE mechanical arts are pretty well underſtood here, but the liberal ſcarce known.

Genoa, however, has an academy, but its members are only ſuch, who, from a narrowneſs of mind, deſire nothing more than to be men of learning. The only ſcience in vogue, is that of making one's fortune; and ſuch is the progreſs of the Genoeſe in this improvement of the human intellects, that no other European nation can pretend to vye with them in this article.

This is the only knowledge allowed of here. Over this national ignorance preſide the bonzes, or monks, and great care they take that the nation ſhall not ſee as far as themſelves. All would be loſt, ſhould the Genoeſe, active and turbulent as they are, attain to any extent of knowledge.

The government partly coincides with the clergy's views; it is well aware of the danger it would be expoſed to, ſhould learning ever diffuſe itſelf among the people. No body is at liberty to print their thoughts, but with the ſenate's permiſſion; and it is only to thoſe who have little or no genius, that the ſenate grants this licence. This is the manner by which moſt of the European governments ſupport themſelves. Tyranny chains down the mind in darkneſs, for, otherwiſe, it would not fail to throw off the yoke of deſpotiſm.

LETTER XLI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Prime Minister, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

HERE are sixty monied-men, who live in golden palaces. They have made their fortunes by the finances, and are stiled farmers-general.

These lecches hire of the King a permission to tyrannize over his subjects; they have a lease for it, and, in consideration of their lease, annually pay him a hundred millions: it is the constant price.

You will readily conceive, that men who have the Prince's full powers, are not very tender of the people; and, really, it would grieve you to see how the latter are treated. The negroes of Africa do not suffer more; but I shall not enter into any detail on this head. They can send the King's subjects to the gallies, and sometimes even put them to death. The Monarch himself furnishes them with all the necessary instruments in arrets. He also barters part of his authority for their money. It is a constant maxim; the King is paid, and the people squeezed.

Formerly this breed was despised as common dirt, but, at length, people of fashion are come into a familiarity with them; the very principal nobility visit them, and are not ashamed of being seen at their entertainments: indeed it should be so, otherwise the voids in the state would be too considerable; money on one side, nobility on the other, and the public indigence in the middle.

Of all the artifices of monied men, in my opinion, none come up to that of having convinced the government of its inability to do without them. They give for reason, that, at present, they constitute a fund of wealth, where the crown finds an immediate resource on any sudden emergency; but the true

true meaning of this is, that they are always ready to advance the King any exorbitant impoſt with which he ſhall ſaddle the people, on condition that the capital, with good intereſt, ſhall be afterwards repaid them. Now it can be only in ſtates where no attention is paid to the public welfare, that ſuch maxims are eſtabliſhed.

LETTER XLII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE favourite ſlave is ſo incumbered, that I don't know how ſhe does to bear up under the weight of her labours. There is no giving you a juſt repreſentation of her life, ſuch is the variety of her diſtractions. She alone has more buſineſs than all the miniſters put together; every ſecretary of ſtate has but one department, whereas ſhe is poſſeſſed of all. She takes cognizance of the church, the army, the revenue, and the navy; the public offices are likewiſe within her verge; beſides ſtate affairs, ſhe alſo has the nomination to poſts and employments. On the death of a French cardinal, ſhe muſt immediately conſider who muſt have the vacant hat. If a diſconcerted general reſigns, ſhe is to provide a ſucceſſor. On a vacancy of the poſt of comptroller-general, ſhe muſt appoint to it; and when the navy is without a chief miniſter, ſhe is to nominate to that office.

After theſe firſt nominations come the ſecond. If a biſhop does not enjoy his health in his dioceſe, ſhe makes him an archbiſhop, by way of change of air. If a brigadier is deſirous of preferment, and has friends to ſpeak for him, ſhe gives him a command in chief. If a rich individual is for engaging in the revenue, ſhe takes care for valuable conſiderations, to provide him with a good branch.

These second denominations are succeeded by the third. It is she who nominates to the royal abbies and grand priories, bestows regiments and companies, appoints directors of the farms, victualling-contractors, and all the clerks in the kingdom.

This is not all; couriers come from foreign courts, on which she must hasten to the King, to see the contents of the dispatches, and give the heads of the answers. In the mean time, ambassadors arrive, and she must know what brings them; others go away, and they must have their audience of leave.

Scarce is this over, when she must take into consideration the promotion of general officers, confer governments, settle pensions, make knights of St. Lewis, appoint to embassies, change secretaries into envoys, draw up credentials, give new orders, remove ministers, exile placemen, and gain over new creatures.

All this, however, belongs only to the great cabinet. The lesser is equally full of business; she must know what the public thinks of the present administration: here the business is to give private audiences, to receive secret advices, to read the letters of pensioned informers, to convey people up the back-stairs, to get intelligence of all the malecontents, to know the great ones who oppose the crown, to come at their schemes, to detect their letters, to take measures for satisfying the malecontents, to stop the mouths of some by pensions, and gain over others by preferments, to banish the intractable out of the kingdom, and clap up the most dangerous in the Bastile, &c. &c. &c.

So much for public affairs: but besides these, she has her own to mind; to make the most of her station, to raise a great fortune, to accumulate immense sums, to have a treasure, to increase it, to make money of every thing, to take from every body, to amass millions, to improve and multiply them, and to place them out on good security.

Yet

Yet all this fatigue is nothing in compariſon of what remains; I mean the pains ſhe is at to preſerve the monarch's affection. It behoves her to prevent whatever may be productive of new inclinations in the enamoured prince, to keep affairs at a diſtance from him, to ſtimulate him to diverſions, ſometimes to allow him to ſee other women, provided they be mute, to put him out of conceit with public company, to accuſtom him to private parties, to divert him, to amuſe him, to keep him always gay and merry, to exclude all remorſes, to ſtifle reflections, to take care that the devil does not affright him, to hinder him from giving himſelf too much up to the black bonzes, to amuſe him conſtantly with diverting tales, to ſport, play, laugh, ſing, ſit up late, ſend him away pleaſed, and attend the next morning on purpoſe to pleaſe him again, &c. &c. &c.

Do you think this a cheap purchaſe of the prince's favours? For my part, were I a woman, I would not undergo the like, to have a boundleſs aſcendant over all the kings in the univerſe; and were I a king all the fine women in the world ſhould never have ſuch an aſcendant over me.

LETTER XLIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

I HAVE elſewhere ſpoken to you of the ladies toilette, but without ſaying any thing of its advantages.

Though the women here wear no veils, yet one part they carefully conceal, and that is their face. They cover themſelves with a white maſtich, extremely thin, and over it they lay on a red colour, with the help of a pencil.

These masks are so ingeniously made, as to imitate faces, and strangers continually mistake them. I frankly own I was deceived. The first time I went to the play, had I not been told before, that all those I saw in the boxes were masks, I should have taken them for women. Indeed a little attention sets one to rights, nature being of no such colour.

It is not only at plays and public entertainments that this masquerade is used, it is the common practice in the daily walks, and familiar visits. They wear this mask in the very pagods, for the European women at present stand so much on the incognito, that they would not shew themselves bare-faced, not even to God the Father. The court-ladies are said to have observed this incognito for near an hundred years.

A native of China never sees his wife before the marriage; but here they go farther, they never so much as see her after marriage. Many a husband is there at Paris, who has lain ten years with his wife, and never once beheld her face. A woman willingly allows her husband every kind of possession but the sight of her countenance: perhaps this is no bad contrivance for preserving matrimonial harmony; so small a matter here will disturb domestic quiet, that the want of an allay of white and red might raise a storm of disgust. This varnished incognito prevents many a divorce between husband and wife; for the seeing each other would cause a separation. Nothing is easier had at Paris than beauty; she who has a head need not be at a loss about a pretty face. Every woman keeps her's in a little pot, and it need not fear the injuries of age, the pot being continually recruited. The beauty of the women here is not of the growth of country; the lily complexion comes from Spain, and the rosy from Italy. A duty on the white and red would put an end to its empire.

However

However convenient it may be for a woman to give herſelf in the morning, the face moſt ſuitable to the part ſhe intends to act all the day, yet I don't know whether the ſex in general be gainers by the bargain. Since this daubing came into vogue there has been no rivalry for a ſuperiority, which women uſed ſo paſſionately to affect: white and red being every where the ſame, all faces are uniform; there is an end of all preference, ſince there is no longer any diſtinction. The variations are wanting in the ſcene of beauty; the face, which repreſents the ſoul, has only one decoration; the paſſions are mute, and there is an end of all expreſſion of ſurpriſe, as well as of the other emotions of the mind.

From this cuſtom of painting, the men derive a great advantage over women, ſince they may give their tongue any freedom in the company of the ladies, and theſe ſhall not turn pale, or ſhew their reſentment by any diſorder in their features; the fibres thro' which this emotion ruſhes, being totally covered, and unable to act externally. To whatever pitch art be carried, ſtill will it be nature's ſlave.

The Chriſtian moraliſts inveigh moſt furiouſly againſt this diſguiſe; ſhould they ſucceed ſo far as to explode it, I queſtion whether men would not pay more adoration to the ſex. The European women have already too many advantages over the men; what would it be, ſhould they diſplay all their native charms and the power of artleſs beauty!

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LETTER XLIV.

Sequel of the great epochas of Europe, and of the court of Rome, to the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

IT was a maxim of the Roman republic to terminate every thing by negotiations; and herein she found her account, great regard being usually paid to her wisdom; whereas, had she referred every dispute to the sword, the chance of war must have decided it.

Rome has not been without some martial Popes; but it is not to these that she is the most indebted for her aggrandizement. After she had got the ascendency in Europe, and all the other powers were formed, she erected a treasury for fines and confiscations, that is, a new kind of usurpation, for swallowing up the dominions of other princes: after this *she proceeded to lay claim to kingdoms.*

As her ambition had no other bounds than the universe, and her power was not confined within Rome, she often sent commissaries to a great distance, to take cognizance of differences between sovereigns, and, under pretence of settling the affairs of Christianity, she directed those of the political and civil world.

Though she affected an appearance of peace, her adherence to that system was not so strict as to be without exceptions; this depended on circumstances. If war was for her advantage, and the only way to gain her point, she would leave second causes to act; she sowed discord among crowned heads. For concentering every thing within her own interested views, and, sacrificing all the world to her grandeur, she gave herself no uneasiness about the destruction of mankind.

Sometimes she even began an open war. Christendom once saw her make a descent in an island, which

which she intended to subdue. God himself set up the standard of this revolt, and the image of Christ, who, according to the tenet of all Christians, came into the world to save the effusion of human blood, was made use of by the Popes to shed it.

Though with scarce any stock of her own, she has almost in all times had a large revenue.

The means by which Rome has several times got into her hands all the wealth of the Christian world, are, 1st, The alms of believers. 2dly, The tribute paid by nations. 3dly, The devotion of the people. 4thly, The sale of indulgences and reliques. 5thly, The redemption of sins, and the sale of dispensations.

On the death of one of her mandarins, she was found possessed of so immense a treasure, that the riches of many temporal powers put together would have fallen much short of it.

The followers of Christ have in all times contributed to enrich Rome; not only numberless individuals have bequeathed their whole substance to her, but she has inherited the dominions of many sovereigns.

There is no specifying the taxes which she raised on the several Christian nations, under the name of *Peter's-Pence*. She has put all the crowned heads successively under contribution.

It has almost ever been a constant custom in Europe to go and worship God in the city where the Pope resides; as if the Deity was more immediately present there, than in any other place, and there was such a thing as local devotion. This, to many, was a journey of three or four hundred leagues. They must have thought that paradise was to be obtained by thoroughly tiring one's self. But the jubilees, another papal institution, were one of its best funds. The number of pilgrims, at some jubilees, has been no less than three hundred thousand; what then must have been the concourse of other believers? for those who hunted after indulgences,

gences, were only the lackeys of Christian devotion.

The sale of indulgences and reliques has always been a rich mine of gold to this city. Her agents, who were legates at the several courts, after disposing of their wares, have often been caught stealing away to Rome with immense sums.

This revenue was the larger, as what was sold cost nothing: the produce of the trade could not but be very great, the first material requiring no stock. The Christians purchased mere non-entities, and readily parted with their money for a chimera, on which their imagination set a high value.

Rome, at those times, sold the privilege of gratifying one's desires for money. A man might lye with his mother, or ravish his sister. Every sin had its tax, only the greater the more expensive. A peccadillo came lower than that of a heinous crime. The increase of enormities among Christians was for Rome's interest; her coffers were the better filled as Europe became deluged with atheism, bestiality, sodomy, and other debaucheries. The price of beatification was settled; there was a way of getting to heaven, even through a course of wickedness.

Not only past and present sins were redeemable, but even sins to come. A Christian could purchase the absolution of all the villainies of a long life, and looked on himself as a saint, tho' he had millions of crimes to commit. This was a sure fund, men in all times having been fond of sinning safely, without fear of punishment.

A dispensation of age, from vows, from making one's self a bonze, or from being tied to a monastic life, to lye with a cousin or niece, to marry or be unmarried, proved another source of opulence.

This continual draining of the secular states was the surest support of Rome's over-grown power; it answered her ends three several ways; it diminished the power of princes, keeping the nations low, and disabled the temporal governments from hurting her.

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The Popes were no longer neceſſitous paſtors, as in the commencement of Chriſtianity; the caſe was altered; they were become potent princes, with dominions, revenues, a treaſury, army, a court, and figuring in all the courts of Europe by ſplendid embaſſies.

The maxims by which Rome carried on her aggrandiſement were not temporary and occaſional, but a conſtant and ſettled plan, from generation to generation. The ſame meaſures which had contributed to her greatneſs, ſhe employed to uphold it.

This power, to which, in thoſe days, even crowned heads paid homage, has no real exiſtence; it ſubſiſts only in opinion, and did the European Chriſtians agree in one ſingle point, there would be an end both of the altar and idol. About two centuries ago, two mandarins cut off both her arms, with two more reformers ſhe would no more be heard of.

LETTER XLV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at* Paris.

Genoa.

THE Genoeſe are looked on as the moſt wicked people in Europe; and certainly it muſt be ſo, for all the world has been of this opinion theſe thirteen hundred years, and it is very evident that ſo many nations agree together in a miſtake.

This, I am inclined to think, proceeds from the inſatiable avidity which this people has ever had for gain. Some governments have enlarged their fortune by œconomy, Genoa has multiplied its wealth by nigardlineſs.

The ſource of this paſſion lies deep; it is derived even from the very conſtitution. There is a law at Genoa by which every one is obliged to preſerve his ſubſtance, and another to hinder any one from ſpending

ſpending it; an admirable regulation for a family, and as improper for a republic, whoſe wealth conſiſts in circulation. 1ſt, The Genoeſe love money; and, 2dly, They worſhip God. The religion of intereſt takes the lead of that of Chriſt.

The great, no leſs than their inferiors, are zealous for this doctrince. Orthodoxy in the worſhip of riches is univerſal; there are no heretics in regard to this article; all ranks profeſs parſimony, or rather avarice. No dogs are to be kept within Genoa; this government will have no uſeleſs mouths, and dogs do not earn money. The republic itſelf buys and ſells. The prince and council are merchants, and often the ſenate cannot attend the affairs of government, being buſy in making up bales, or ſending away goods.

Were I to paint the Doge of Venice, in all the pomp of Genoeſe majeſty, he ſhould have a velvet throne, and a damaſk chair; his audience room ſhould be a compting-houſe, and bills of exchange his ordinances. The moſt ſolemn ſenators are ſeen in their ware-houſes buying and ſelling, and attend their *Banchi* cloſer than the council of ſtate. What morals there can be amongſt this people thou wilt readily conceive; for in a country where the love of gain is the predominant paſſion, avarice dictates to all other vices.

In a ſtate where every body trades, there can be no probity in commerce; for in ſuch a caſe the way is thronged, and they muſt be turning and winding continually, not to run foul of each other. This produces tricks and artifices, and from theſe to fraud there is ſcarce any interval; at leaſt, a nation fond of money eaſily leaps over this barrier.

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LETTER XLVI.

To the Same.

Genoa.

THE part which I am now acting here, is what I am ſure thou never wouldſt have dreamt of. I, with all my unworthineſs, am the very humble Ciciſbeo to a Genoeſe lady; an honour for which I may thank my little Chineſe eyes, and my Aſiatic appearance.

How I attained this honourable poſt is thus; an old worn out Ciciſbeo having caught his death by dancing after a young lady, the huſband, with whom I contracted a kind of acquaintance at a coffee-houſe, pitched on me to fill the vacancy. Being naturally a little jealous, he thought that my odd appearance would not take much with his wife, and conſequently he ſhould be more at eaſe; accordingly he wrote me the following letter:

"Signor Chineſe,

"We Genoeſe huſbands are too buſy, and our "wives have too much ſpare time to do without "company; they muſt have a gallant, a dog, or a "monkey; I therefore apply to you, deſiring you "would take on yourſelf which of theſe three em-"ployments you like beſt with my wife. Her "Ciciſbeo has been dead about a week, his "place is at your ſervice. My wife is young, and "has her ſhare of vivacity, ſo that I believe you "two will do very well together. I ſhall expect "you this afternoon, and introduce you to her "myſelf."

I complied with the invitation, and was immediately inſtalled into the poſt of Ciciſbeo. Thou knoweſt I am of a ſwarthy complexion, and low of ſtature, and withal not very fleſhy; I apprehended therefore

therefore my appearance would not do, but I perceived the lady liked me well enough. The Europeans have a saying that a woman had rather have a quarter of a man than no man at all.

Being an abſolute ſtranger to a Ciciſbeo's functions, I deſired the huſband to give me ſome inſtructions, which he did the next day in the following manner:

DUTIES *of a* CICISBEO.

I.

The Ciciſbeo is to be with his lady every morning, preciſely at nine o'clock, to ſerve her in bed with chocolate or coffee.

II.

On coming into her chamber, he muſt not forget to open the windows, that while he is ſerving the lady in her bed, he may ſee what he is about.

III.

If the lady aſks him for a pin to pin the upper part of her ſhift, in order to hide her breaſts, he is to look for one over all the apartment, and though there be two or three thouſand lying on her toilet he muſt be ſure not to find one.

IV.

Should her chambermaids not be in the room when ſhe is for leaving her bed, the Ciciſbeo, ſo far from withdrawing, ſhall help her to dreſs herſelf.

V.

At her toilet, he is to ſtand behind her like a ſervant, for the more readily handing to her all the ſeveral ingredients in the compoſition of a Genoeſe face, the white, the red, the patch-box, the pomatum, carefully avoiding any miſtake in the utenſils of beauty.

The

VI.

The buſineſs of the toilet being gone through, he is to hand her to her chair, and attend her to maſs, walking before, or on one ſide of the chair, like a foot-man, till near the church, when he is to quicken his pace, and get thither quite out of breath, to be in readineſs to preſent her with holy water.

VII.

In the evening he is to wait on her to the play, and there ſit next to her.

VIII.

In winter he is to give the lady her ſtove, and put it under her coats, &c.

There are many other articles appertaining to the poſt of Ciciſbeo; but theſe relate to ſecret ſervices, and the Genoeſe huſbands are to wink at them.

With all thy gravity thou could'ſt not forbear laughing to ſee me in the Ciciſbean habit of ceremony; I am dreſſed in black from head to foot, with a little cloak of the ſame colour hanging at my ſhoulders, and a peruke big enough to hide half a dozen Chineſe faces.

I am, however, not the only foreigner who has been honoured with this illuſtrious title. The general hiſtory of Ciciſbeos at Genoa affords many inſtances of Engliſh, French, and Spaniards acting in that office; and not very long ſince a French general was Ciciſbeo to a woman, when the Germans ſtormed the city.

LETTER XLVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

OF all the governments on earth, ſurely the worſt policed is the republic of letters; it is void of all order and juſtice: its people, who are called authors, are for the moſt part arrant banditti, living on theft and rapine; every ſubject ſeizes on another's property, and converts it to his uſe. The Greeks and Romans, who formerly depoſited great riches, in the hands of this ſtate, are every day plundered without mercy. Theſe lettered thieves are termed plagiaries, that is, writers whoſe works belong to others, and who would never have written, had not others written before them.

There is nothing eaſier at preſent, in Europe, than *book-making*. Genius has little or no ſhare in it; it is merely a buſineſs of memory. To have read a ſet of ancient and modern books, to retain the anecdotes, the moſt remarkable paſſages, and the ſtriking ſentences, ſuffices. The remainder relates to the pen, which arranges the materials, and the author ſets up the loom.

A modern European writer can be compared to nothing better than to a gardener, collecting trees from all parts of the world into a piece of ground of ſome acres, without any merit of his own, but the labour.

A point warmly diſputed here is, whether the ancient authors ſurpaſs the modern? a queſtion which we ſhould not have heard of, had not the ancient authors exiſted; ſince it may be preſumed, that the moderns would never have taken pen in hand, had not the ancients ſhewn them the way; at leaſt, were the works of the former to be ſtripped of what belongs to the latter, they would make but a very ſcurvy appearance. They are indebted to them

them for that very genius, which they ſhew in the diſcuſſion of this queſtion; for, in their proofs, they are for ever quoting thoſe ancients: ſo that the very reaſon produced for their deficiency, demonſtrates their ſuperiority.

Though books are ever making their appearance in Europe, it is a long time ſince there has been any writing; authors only repeat from each other; what they ſay is no more than what has been ſaid over and over.

The form and manner, the drapery of genius, and the giving a new turn to trite thoughts, is now an author's whole buſineſs; if he exhibits in a new light what every body knows, he is an original writer.

Theſe are the men who at preſent ſet up to be the ornaments of Europe, and who are ſo inflated with the title of authors, that they look on their fellow creatures only as groveling mortals, unworthy to breathe the ſame air with themſelves.

LETTER XLVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Prime Miniſter, at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN my opinion, a people had better be without genius, than employ it in broaching pernicious maxims.

About a week ago, I was in company with two ſtateſmen, and the diſcourſe turned on the preſent broils of Europe: after ſome remarks on the calamities under which this part of the globe labours, and ſeveral very judicious obſervations tending to prove it beyond all exceptions the moſt unhappy ſpot upon the earth, they concluded, that war was a neceſſary evil. This ſolution they founded on principles drawn, ſaid they, from the nature of things.

The

The way these gentlemen took, to prove the indispensable necessity of men's cutting one another's throats, was this: "Man, in the state of nature, "lives in peace; but his union with those of his "species subjecting him to the laws of subordinati-"on, he forfeits that benefit. War begins between "man and man; thence follows that between na-"tion and nation; in short, it is founded on soci-"ety itself." This they called a severe law, but "barbarous would have suited it much better.

Gentlemen, said I, may I take the liberty of asking you a question or two on this head? How comes it that lions do not devour each other? Why, answered one of them, because lions are beasts, and know nothing of the laws of society. Very well, said I; and, pray, what do you mean by society? Society is the union of man. Excellent! And does this union, replied I, consist in destroying each other? Far from it, added he, the end of this union is their mutual preservation. How then, added I again, can you give such a name to that which has a manifest tendency to destruction?

A Frenchman will never own himself in the wrong; when a breach is made in one of his entrenchments, he immediately slips into another, where he endeavours to defend himself with fresh weapons; accordingly the politician with whom I was engaged urged a second reason, to demonstrate the geometrical necessity of men's slaughtering one another.

The body politic, like the human, stands in need of evacuations; without bleeding, now and then, it would be choaked up; were it not for wars, Europe would be so full of people, that its inhabitants would devour one another; besides the earth could not produce sustenance for such infinite multitudes, and famine would do much more mischief than gunpowder. Now, battles and sieges keep things in a due equilibrium, and thus prevent other, and much more dismal calamities.

It

It is amazing that such maxims can come into the human mind, and a system of extermination be advanced from the very fear of it. It is offering an indignation to nature to reduce it to annihilation, as a means to prevent its being annihilated; it is charging the Deity with a physical defect in his work.

Yet is this a current maxim all over Europe, it is espoused at court and in this city; it stands printed in a thousand books, and at present is so much in vogue, that should any European take on himself to oppose it, he would be looked on as a man of a narrow cast, incapable of exalted ideas.

The doctrine of the Christian Confucius may perhaps have contributed to the prevalence of this maxim, for it is religion which gives the turn to nations, and his book is full of wars, not only of men, but even of angels *.

LETTER XLIX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the same at* Pekin.

Paris.

THOSE very statesmen, after deciding war to be a necessary evil, fell to discussing, whether it could be just? That is as much as to ask, whether the passions of princes are equitable? and whether ambition, from which they always proceed, be founded on justice and probity? or otherwise, whether a desire of conquering on all sides be just.

Mankind would never be troubled with wars, were sovereigns and rulers just; as then they would prevent every cause which had the least tendency to disturbance; humanity, pity, and clemency, which are the chief attributes of justice, would stifle any motive to discord and variance.

If

* This is a great mistake; the Christian religion breathes nothing but brotherly love, meekness, and peace.

If Sovereigns, the uſual authors of war, were juſt, they would know that to diminiſh nature is offending againſt its laws; that to deſtroy the work of the Deity is an affront to himſelf; that in his ſight the blood of one man is more valuable than all the kingdoms of the earth; that there is a law of nations for men, of an authority ſuperior to the intereſt of kings; and that, to cauſe millions of people to periſh, and generally from a miſtake, is an atrocious violation of that reſpectable law.

I ſay, it is not only treſpaſſing againſt nature, the Deity, and the law of nations, but even againſt humanity, by which alone ſociety can be ſupported; it is moſt criminal barbarity to put a country to fire and ſword, to maſſacre multitudes of people, ravage provinces, and lay cities and towns in aſhes, for ſome ſtate-differences, which candour and integrity might always bring to an amicable iſſue.

If there be ſcarce any ſuch thing, as an ambitious prince being juſt, it is of courſe morally impoſſible that wars, being only the conſequence of that paſſion, ſhould be ſo; for the effect cannot be more lawful than its cauſe.

Wert thou to read the abſurdities of the European lawyers, who maintain in their huge volumes, that there are equitable wars, thou wouldſt deſpiſe their reaſonings, and at the ſame time pity the people whom they ſo far impoſe on, as to make ſuch a maxim a ſtanding law to them. I have read the hiſtory of the wars of Europe for theſe two hundred years paſt; and not one have I met with which was founded on any tolerable motive.

What juſtice can be expected from princes who are judges in their own cauſe, who mind only their perſonal intereſts, who are for getting all they can, who prefer the idea of empty glory to the welfare of their people, and who give their reaſons from the mouths of their cannon? The iniquity of wars appears no where better than in the manifeſtoes of belligerant ſovereigns, accuſing each other of breach of faith, and ſeverally appealing to the tribunal of the

the whole world, againſt the injuſtice of their antagoniſts; and this, perhaps, is the only particular in which the European policy ſpeaks truth.

The Europeans have two kinds of juſt wars; one for repelling the attacks of an enemy, the other in defence of an ally who is attacked. In the firſt caſe, it is only half of the war that can be juſt; for a prince who firſt puts another under the neceſſity of defending himſelf is a tyrant: nay, the motive of this defenſive war, ſo much inſiſted on by the European civilians in their public law, may not be ſo very juſt, as often the defending party had it in his power to prevent the rupture.

As to the aſſiſtance due to an ally, it would be much better to negotiate a peace for him, than wage war in his defence.

LETTER L.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE inhabitants of Paris are divided into ſeveral little bodies called *cotteries*; each *cotterie* has its peculiar turn and obſervances, nothing of which makes a part in the inſtitutes of the reſt.

A Pariſian belonging to a cotterie of the Marais, on being tranſplanted into a cotterie of the Fauxbourg de St. Germain, finds himſelf in a new world, to the manners and cuſtoms of which he is an utter ſtranger. It is as it were to him the Indies of Paris, and it will take him up no little time to adapt himſelf to the taſte and genius of the inhabitants, their principle and uſages being quite unknown to him.

Though all theſe little worlds are within the circuit of Paris walls, in regard to manners, one cotterie is often a thouſand leagues diſtant from another.

The women, amidſt all the privileges they enjoy

here, have not that of being no ſtrangers in a new cotterie.

I was lately at one of theſe little meetings in Luxembourg ward, when a lady of St. Dennis's-ſtreet was introduced for the firſt time.

The company immediately began to take her appearance under examination; from her features they proceeded to her air, her ſhape and carriage; all her appurtenances having undergone a ſtrict ſurvey, were declared ridiculous, &c.

On paying her firſt compliments to the miſtreſs of the houſe, her expreſſions raiſed a general ſimper. One would think that genius was different in each of theſe meetings, and that what is wit in one cotterie, is ſtupidity in another.

It is only the court-ladies who are ſo privileged as to be ſtrangers no where. When they are pleaſed to condeſcend ſo far as to honour theſe meetings with their preſence, their peremptory accent, and lofty carriage, ſtrike with admiration; no body preſumes to controul them in diſplaying their extravagance and follies, that is, in ſhining there contrary to all good ſenſe, wit and reaſon. This is a privilege derived in a right line from the palace of Verſailles.

LETTER LI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Same, at* Pekin.

Paris.

FOrmerly the French uſed to kill one another in mere wantonneſs; no man could call his life his own; for a look, a geſture, a word, challenges were ſent, by which two or more perſons conſented to meet at a place appointed, and do the beſt to cut each others throats.

This people did not, at that time, ſtand in need of any foreign wars to thin them; the inteſtine folly anſwered their purpoſe. It was nothing uncommon

mon to hear, as it were, pitched battles of duelliſts, in which moſt of the combatants fell on the ſpot.

It is now about a century ſince one of their Kings put an end to this abuſe. He publiſhed an edict prohibiting his ſubjects from killing one another: but that edict has ſince given riſe to many perplexities; for now a gentleman diſgraces himſelf, if he conforms to the law; and ſhould he infringe it, he is puniſhed.

He who makes the royal ordinance his rule, is accounted a ſcoundrel; no man of reputation will keep him company; and he who violates that ſalutary law, is indicted as a diſturber of the public peace, is puniſhed, his fortune is confiſcated, and not ſeldom does his life pay for his temerity, as a noxious member of ſociety.

This proceeds from the oppoſition between private opinions in Europe, and the general ſyſtem; and from every one's laying down to himſelf ſuch a rule of conduct as moſt ſuits his humour.

In China, the firſt duty is to obey the laws. I don't know of any one particular caſe in which a perſon would diſgrace himſelf, by the moſt punctual obedience to the orders of his ſovereign.

LETTER LII.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THOU deſireſt to know the methods made uſe of by the weſtern people in the acquiſition of learning, and this I ſhall inform thee of; there is nothing eaſier. This is the proceſs; the whole European genius is contained in large libraries, conſiſting, perhaps, of millions of books; theſe books are the reſervoir, or ſtore-houſe, of underſtanding, from whence every European takes what he ſtands in need of, in order to have wit.

To avoid confusion in the sciences, each class of scholars has its division, where its authors stand with their names: beyond this precinct he must not go, as he would find himself in a foreign country, and not so much as know the name of the inhabitants.

All the labour consists in the research. They go on poring over these books for a long time, and often during their whole life, without finding the genius sought for. They, whose good fortune it is to light on it, are the elect in science; and this is what makes all the difference between the learned and the ignorant.

Though they have been labouring hard at the library of sciences for above twenty centuries, I am assured that learning is still *in statu quo*, and that the European genius has not gained an inch of ground for these two thousand years past. I readily believe it, for nothing is put into the store-house of genius but what has been taken from it; nay, it is affirmed that less is put in than is taken out; if so, the library of the sciences must be a hindrance to the perfecting them, and thus the assiduous reader would at length come to know nothing.

They are ever dressing up the thoughts of the ancients in a modern taste; but when all the modes of wit shall be exhausted, only the primary elements of science will remain, and these being destitute of new turns, will relapse into their original non-entity.

Men in general are not adapted to the sciences; limited beings cannot travel over that which is unlimited: but of all the individuals on the face of the earth, perhaps the Europeans are the least qualified for literary attainments.

These people give themselves up to a great many false notions, from which other nations are free. They have too much fire, too much wit and vivacity. They are too great lovers of company, and this very thing is one great impediment to learning. The continual round of entertainments, diversions, and whims, infects the mind with a levity and giddiness,

dineſs, incompatible with the improvement of arts and ſciences. The European genius ſhould be, as it were, new caſt, in order to give it that ſolidity and ſteadineſs neceſſary in the acquiſition of real knowledge. Perhaps ſome change ſhould alſo be made in its climate, which has too great an influence on its genius; the more cloſely we examine the terraqueous globe, the leſs aptitude do we find in it for the ſcientifical attainments.

America is naturally without genius, Africa has no talents, Aſia is not ſufficiently communicative, and the Europeans run into the other extreme.

LETTER LIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Same, at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE ſubjects here are at ſo great a diſtance from the prince, as to be quite out of his hearing. The complaints of aggrieved innocence ſeldom reach above half-way to the throne, being loſt in the public lamentations: the monarch knows nothing of the private iniquities committed in the adminiſtration.

A few mornings ago, a man of no bad appearance knocked at my door, begging ſome relief: he told me that he was a ſubject of the King of France; I take the liberty, added he, to put into your hands a memorial, on a notorious injuſtice done me by a law-court of this kingdom, affecting me both in my honour and perſon. Who may you be, Sir, ſaid I? I am, anſwered he, an unfortunate perſon, juſt eſcaped from the gallies. Has that always been your condition? Far from it, ſaid he, it is but lately that I was a magiſtrate of Straſburg, in the province of Alſace; beſides, I had a conſiderable poſt in the revenue, but by the villainy of corrupt judges I have been ſent to the gallies. If you can prove that any wrong has been done you, ſaid I, it will be an eaſy matter to have redreſs; the King is too good to ſuf-

fer any of his ſubjects to be injured in ſuch a manner. What ſignifies all his goodneſs, replied he, when moſt of his officers are villains? Make a clamour, ſaid I, againſt ſuch a horrid grievance; go about in all public places. That's what I can't do, ſaid he, I am obliged to keep myſelf concealed, for my ſentence, though unjuſt and cruel, is ſtill in force. Were I to be known, I ſhould be hurried back to the gallies, if not hanged; beſides, few care to ſee me, and nobody will ſtir in my behalf. I have been publickly whipped and branded by the executioner, and condemned for life to the miſeries of a galley, which is, Sir, the puniſhment here for the vileſt malefactors. And have not you petitioned the King? I have ſent ſeveral petitions, added he, but none ever came to his hand; for my enemies, after uſing me ſo infamouſly, have taken care to debar me from any acceſs to the ſovereign, ſo that I have been obliged to print memorials; in the mean time I am forlorn, deſtitute, and cruſhed with affliction and miſery. In this memorial, continued he, you will find a full account of the horrid wrongs done to me, and likewiſe of the villain who prevailed on the judges to condemn me to puniſhments which his own exactions had deſerved.

In this piece, which I peruſed, it appears that that the city of Straſburg was governed by a royal magiſtrate called Pretor, who committed all kinds of oppreſſions on the people of that province; the author of the memorial always oppoſed him with a patriotic ardour; ſo that the Pretor, incenſed at this honeſt man's boldneſs, determined to ruin him; to this purpoſe he corrupted the judges, who ſentenced him in the manner he complains of in a public writing.

LETTER LIV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at Paris.*

Milan.

MILAN *, where I have been for ſome time, is a city remarkable for pomp and magnificence: but its luxury, as in France, is a conſequence of the public indigence. There are people here with two coaches, and not one pair of ſhoes; nothing comes nearer a Pariſian ſuburb, than the city of Milan. There is even ſome affinity in the manners and deportment of the people, ſo that were it not for their jealouſy and ſuperſtition, the Milaneſe would be taken for Frenchmen; but an Italian nation cannot hide its weakneſs, there is always ſomething which detects it.

Formerly Milan had its Duke, who was an independant ſovereign; but, at preſent, the country is under a foreign power, continually draining it by taxes, which are loſt to it, being remitted abroad. Vienna, which is the exacting power, hires a governor to repreſent it, and this Governor is ſovereign of an Italian ſtate. I believe that Europe is the only part of the world, where reigning ſovereigns demean themſelves ſo as to quit their throne, and become the hirelings of a foreign prince.

* The Chineſe Spy is not regular in his travels through Italy.

LETTER LV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

I Told you in one of my former letters, that the wars of Europe are owing to an effuſion of bile, or a dry acrid and aduſt blood in ſovereigns. I am not ſingular in this thought; an European politician is ſo far perſuaded of it, that he has lately publiſhed a ſcheme for a general pacification on theſe principles, containing the methods for terminating the differences of the potentates now at war. I herewith ſend it thee, and thou wilt ſee it is not unlike a phyſician's preſcription.

PLAN *of* PEACE

Between the belligerant powers of Europe.

PRELIMINARIES.

ART. I.

The European ſovereigns now at war ſhall be under a particular regimen for a fortnight, during which time nobody is to mention the words bomb, bullet, ball, cannon, in their preſence.

ART. II.

They ſhall forget their variances, and, eſpecially, let it not come into their heads that they have armies.

ART. III.

Every morning, at their riſing, let a chapter of morality be read to them, on the happineſs of a quiet life, and the contempt of grandeur and riches.

ART. IV.

Political medicaments and decoctions for attaining a general peace.

ART.

ART. V.

The King of Pruſſia is to uſe the home-baths a fortnight without intermiſſion, taking care that the water be not too hot; he is to continue in the bath three whole hours, without directly or indirectly inquiring about his army, and without reading diſpatches from his camp, or any other inflammatory packets; he may, however, play on the flute, read Voltaire's works, and make verſes on *Sans Souci*. In caſe that after a week his temperament continue the ſame, and his imagination be taken up as before, with ſieges and battles, he is immediately to betake himſelf to the cold river baths.

ART. VI.

The Queen of Hungary ſhall, for the ſpace of a fortnight, every evening, take a ſleepy draught, with ſome grains of opium in it, that it may the more effectually lay her in ſuch a ſound ſleep, as to loſe all remembrance of Sileſia.

ART. VII.

The King of France ſhall, every evening, for the ſpace of a month, on his going to bed, take a julep of poppies, which, by being ſomniferous in the higheſt degree, will cauſe him to forget the diſgraces of his flag, and the loſs of Canada. This will alſo compoſe his ſenſes, and diſpoſe him to lend an ear to pacific overtures.

ART. VIII.

George II. ſhall be adminiſtred two ounces of barley meal, with a like quantity of hartſhorn and bruiſed ſnails, as a lenitive, which will make him eaſy about H———, and, by ſuſpending his reſolutions, will prevent his being over haſty for ſaving a territory of no uſe to England.

ART. IX.

The Empreſs of Ruſſia ſhall cool her blood with an emulſion of the four cold ſeeds, which will hin-

der her, for the future; from being so hot about the affairs of Germany, with which she has nothing to do.

LETTER LVI.

The same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na *at* Pekin.

Paris.

HERE are tribunals of wit and genius, called academies, the judges of which are profoundly read in all sciences.

Each academy has its precinct, within which it is to keep, and not invade the departments of another.

The grandees, though without any tincture of letters, are, however admitted into the societies, and as honorary academicians; a title I do not understand, and which is even a ridicule on its meaning, nothing being more disgraceful to a literary society than the company of the illiterate.

These academies are not useless, for the improvement of knowledge, and the enlargement of the human understanding; they propose, from time to time, very abstruse questions; for instance, *Whether the Chinese are men? Whether the Indians have a sensitive soul? or whether there be any difference between an American and a brute?* and they who give the best solution of these useful problems, are presented with a golden image. There must certainly be some magic in this image, for thou canst not imagine the emulation it stirs up in all the members of the academies, so that some have been found half-dead in their studies with labouring to obtain one of these baubles.

Amongst the great number of these literary tribunals, I shall only mention four, *the academy of words, the academy of facts, the academy of writings, the academy of songs.* The business of that of words, or the French academy, is the arrangement of terms. It was probably instituted lest the nation should become

come dumb; but of all the ſeveral inſtitutions in this monarchy, I know of none more uſeleſs; there never having been any danger of the French loſing their ſpeech.

It was apprehended ſome time ago, that the academicians themſelves would become dumb, for it had placed its whole learning and knowledge in a huge book called a dictionary: but, by a particular contrivance, it has effectually removed all ſuch apprehenſion, being continually employed in taking from that vocabulary, the words it had depoſited there; and with them it compoſes academical ſpeeches, ſo that the celebrated body will have wherewith to ſpeak, till words and voice ſhall be no more.

The academy of faces, or painting, can do without wit, or ſo much as genius; its capacity lies at the end of a pencil; all its buſineſs is to tranſmit to poſterity likeneſſes and attitudes: Its books are on canvas, and its libraries are made up of pictures, in which the academicians brighten their fancy, though generally againſt all common ſenſe.

The academy of writings, or the belles-lettres, does not talk ſo much as that of words, but with the affectation of thinking more. It is allowed to take a view of moſt ſciences, and at the ſame time is not obliged to enter into laborious inveſtigations. It is a papilio which flutters about the ſciences, but only ſkims the ſurface of them.

The academy of ſongs applies itſelf wholly to the modulation of a tune, articulating quavers, ſigures, and the arrangement of little black ſpots among lines. Its principal care is to make a noiſe; the greater the clatter, the more honour to the academicians.

LET.

LETTER LVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin Prime Miniſter, at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is not in all France a more troubleſome calling than that of a miniſter of ſtate; it would grieve thee to ſee theſe poor creatures: their buſineſs puts them continually out of breath; they are always puffing and blowing, and at the ſame time they grow quite ſwelled. Their labours ceaſe not with the day, the night is no ſeaſon of reſt to them; and as they forget themſelves, as little are they mindful of others; indeed, did not women and diverſions bring them back into company, they would be altogether inviſible.

Tho' theſe laborious men are within one ſtep of getting into the beſt branch of government, they take a long circuit which does not lead to it; ſuch is the penetration of theſe vaſt geniuſes, that they ſee the advantages of the monarchy where they are not, and ſee nothing where they really are.

France contains a hundred and fifty millions of ſquare miles, which, well cultivated, will yield ſubſiſtence for twenty five millions of inhabitants; its bare products will ſupply it with a ſufficiency of the firſt materials for carrying on the moſt extenſive trade in Europe, and giving it a maritime force ſuperior to that of all the other ſtates put together.

Four plain and eaſy ſyſtems would make this monarchy the moſt flouriſhing in the univerſe; theſe are, agriculture, navigation, commerce, and ſhipping; but they are not even thought of: theſe four ſo important branches of government are totally neglected, while others of little or no conſequence are purſued with all poſſible eagerneſs. The King of France's miniſters ſeem to have laid a wager who ſhould

ſhould weaken the kingdom moſt; and ſo effectual have the meaſures been for that purpoſe, that the vaſt body is fallen into a decay; the ſtate is now only ſkin and bone, and its ghaſtlineſs is frightful.

Theſe miniſters are ſtiled *excellencies*; very excellent men they truly are for protracting buſineſs, and letting the government die of a conſumption.

Wert thou acquainted with the occupations of their excellencies, thou wouldſt think their view in holding their places was, not to diſcharge them. One great affair takes up all their thoughts, and in their ſleep they dream of it; namely, to raiſe money. This is their main qualification. In their cloſets is a little medal called *Louis-d'or*, on which turn all their ſpeculations. This is a Secretary of State's philoſopher's ſtone. When they have ſqueezed from the people an infinite number of theſe medals, the great work is compleated.

Do not imagine that theſe miniſters are deficient in watchfulneſs; the world has not men of more activity; they have not their equals for receiving memorials and reading petitions. They are eſpecially inimitable in what is called diſpatches; it is a pity that theſe diſpatches are not expeditious, for a miniſter, after ten years diſpatching, has done nothing. They are buried up to the chin in papers, and their life wears away in making up rolls; this it ſeems is ſuch a taſk they have no time to give an eye to the ſtate, which is running to ruin through the multiplicity of their writings, for amidſt the hurry only of their correſpondences, they cannot but loſe ſight of the monarchy. There is not one of theſe miniſters who does not write or dictate eight or ten thouſand letters every year, and three fourths of this trouble might be ſaved, were they not ſo exceſſively fond of details, and inſignificant trifles. It is the whole employment of about twenty clerks, day and night, to copy papers of no conſequence; and theſe ſecondary miniſters ſhall take up more pages in entering into proofs of ſome private con-

cern,

cern, than we, in China, for the general affairs of the empire. Then they muſt hear and know every thing; the very branch of ſecret conferences, to be informed of what the world ſays of them and their adminiſtration, is ſufficient to employ their whole time. Another, and no inconſiderable part of their miniſtry, is the giving public audiences. Didſt thou but ſee how big they look at coming out of the audience-room, where they have heard much and ſpoke little, thou wouldſt ſurely think thoſe men to be the moſt uſeful in the whole monarchy.

LETTER LVIII.

The ſame to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

SPAIN has an inquiſition for thoſe who do not believe in Chriſt, the Pope, and the church; and in France there is one for thoſe who do not believe in the miniſtry, or in the ſovereign's miſtreſſes and favourites.

It is here expreſsly commanded not to ſpeak on ſubjects on which it is impoſſible to be ſilent, I mean the bad management of affairs, of which every individual feels the effects. A prince might as well publiſh an edict, that his ſubjects, when ſick, ſhall not complain of the pains they endure.

To the inquiſition of the French government belongs a great number of ſpies, called familiars, who, every morning repair to their poſts, that is, the public walks, the gardens, and coffee-houſes. The Spaniſh familiars are paid for liſtening, the French for promoting talk. They draw you in to ſpeak of ſtate-affairs, or the favourites of the prince; and if any heterodox notions eſcape you concerning either, you are laid by the heels. It is very hard that a man ſhould ſuffer for a few words ſpoke at random; and much more to be puniſhed for an inarticulate motion.

One

One of these familiars was lately in a coffee-house, launching out in praise of a certain court lady, whom all the world knows. A knight of the military order of St. Lewis, who had spent six months in the Bastile for having spoke, and ever since has been dumb, lifted up his eyes to heaven, at a certain particular of the panegyric, as expressing his admiration of the fine things he heard; the next day he was taken up. Among the Moors in Africa the body is only in slavery, whereas, in France, the mind itself is held captive.

This inquisition allows of lying, but forbids speaking truth. For instance, one may say of a minister who is ruining every thing, that he fills his post with great honour and capacity; and that a certain lady, who is stripping the nation, enriches it: but he that should say, that the one knows nothing of government, and that the other knows her own interest, would severely smart for his frankness. These are truths which are never forgiven. The doctrine of the court differs herein from that of religion; the more virtuous a person is, the more criminal he is in the eye of this inquisition. State-calumny it readily overlooks; but against detraction it is inexorable.

High treason, with which they are only properly chargeable who attack the prince in person, is here wrested to every case. A subject, who has never so much as seen the king in his whole life, and who, so far from plotting against him, would shed the last drop of blood in his defence, is often imprisoned for high treason.

Though this be, at present, the fashionable crime in France, it may be affirmed, that there is no state in Europe where it is less known. Nobody is so much concerned for the public distresses, as to call him to account from whom they might be suspected to proceed. This trespass relates only to the placemen or favourites. High treason is not for having offended the throne; this nobody thinks of;

of; the treaſon lies in having given offence to thoſe who are near the ſovereign.

A miniſter who governed France under Lewis XIII. is ſaid to have proved demonſtratively, that to revile the miniſter is a direct attack on the King; which is juſt as much as to ſay, that an offence done to a footman is the ſame as if it had been offered to his maſter. I ſuppoſe it is ever ſince that time there have been ſo many taken up for high treaſon; for the monarch having always a ſwarm of miniſters and favourites, delinquents muſt of courſe be very numerous. There is a little man here, a kind of officiating ſecretary of ſtate who ſigns letters de cachet.

I obſerved, in peruſing the univerſal hiſtory of Europe and its governments, that the more a prince gives himſelf up to ſenſuality and diverſion, the greater number of ſubjects are committed to priſon. At this preſent writing the gaols of this kingdom ſwarm with ſtate-priſoners; all places of ſecurity are crouded with them, ſo that the government is at a loſs where to ſtow any more. The ſtate abounds more with priſoners than with ſoldiers.

They talk of a priſon of ſuch an amplitude, as occaſionally to contain half the French nation; but till this doleful edifice ſhall be erected, there is one way for the inquiſition not to loſe any of its fees, which would be to make gates to Paris, and then ſhut them, thus confining all the inhabitants as ſtate priſoners.

LETTER LIX.

The Same, to the Mandarin Superintendant of Religion, at Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is in France a ſociety of black bonzes, who make three vows, a vow of diſſimulation, a vow of riches, and a vow of acquiſition; all from a contempt of the world, from Chriſtian love, and for the

the greater glory of God: and ſo exact are they in the obſervation of theſe vows, that they are never known to break them.

Beſides theſe three vows, they have a fourth, which in a great meaſure is the ſame foundation of the others, I mean the vow of commerce, which they have profeſſed ſo ſucceſsfully, as to become the principal traders in the univerſe. Indeed they follow the example which the moſt famous merchants have ſet them, becoming bankrupts now and then in order to enrich themſelves the ſooner.

Already their wealth is ſuch as would amaze thee; another hundred millions, and they would be able to purchaſe the kingdom, of which they have this long time been making a ſale. The riches of the houſe of Bourbon, the reigning family, cannot come in competition with this ſelf-denying ſociety.

Beſides their traffic to Africa, Aſia, Europe, and America, they are likewiſe phyſicians, ſurgeons, and apothecaries. They ſell phyſic of all kinds; drops, powders, eſſences, ſpirits, and pills for the moſt ſcandalous diſeaſes.

Some time ago they had a violent diſpute with other bonzes and mandarins concerning predeſtination; but herein they did not ſee that they were predeſtinated to be driven out of France; and this is now going to be the caſe.

LETTER LX.

The Same, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is no manner of uniformity in European ſociety: the ways of life and profeſſions are ſo oppoſite, that men differ from one another, as darkneſs from light.

I lately went to ſee a little ſociety of bonzes, called Carthuſians. Theſe monks, on their coming into the convent, leave their tongue at the door. They

They make a vow never to ſpeak. The word *woman* they are not allowed to utter, and that of propagation is likewiſe forbidden. They ſing all day, and pray all night. Their diſcipline is to forget earthly things, that they may cloſely attend to thoſe of heaven. Their life is one continual meditation on the contempt of ſublunary enjoyments. Their waking thoughts are to be employed about the Deity, and they are to dream of him whilſt they ſleep.

How different this life, from that of the other ſubjects breathing the ſame air, and educated under the ſame laws: the generality of theſe ſeem to have made a vow of never being ſilent; they are ſtrangers to the very word. If not their law, their cuſtom is never to think on the things of heaven, but give themſelves up wholly to thoſe of the world. Their life is one continual round of frivolous amuſements, which employ their thoughts by day, and their dreams by night.

And it is not only in theſe two conditions that the difference lies, there is the like contrariety almoſt in every claſs.

You find here people who are continually at work, others again who are totally idle; ſome in a perpetual motion, and others in one continual inactivity; ſome are eternally talking, ſome ever writing; the former walk about from morning till night, the latter never ſtir from their chair; ſome again are ever with women, and others ſhun their company, &c. &c.

This picture is but a ſlight ſketch of the perpetual contraſt obſerved here; the reaſon of it does not lie deep; it is owing to the want of uniformity in the political and civil government.

LET-

LETTER LXI.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pe-kin.

Paris.

VOLUPTUOUSNESS has not infected every claſs of ſociety

Paris is not without ſome modeſt women; but they are ſo ugly that they are as it were obliged to to be virtuous.

The chevalier who ſets up for ſkill in phyſiognomy, diſcerns female virtue in the features. On ſeeing a woman with only one eye, or ſome blemiſh in her looks, he immediately ſays, That's a woman of honour; and though he owns this rule not to be infallible, it ſeems he has very ſeldom found himſelf miſtaken.

The ſmall-pox has here ſuch an influence on the temper of women, that a young lady who had a keen reliſh of gallantry, on the loſs of her beauty by this diſtemper, betook herſelf to an exemplary virtue.

A perſon of eminence had ſtruck out a ſcheme of Chriſtian morality, which tended to diſfigure the ſex, in order for their more ſurely going to heaven; but it did not take place: very probably the women oppoſed it, chuſing rather to run the riſque of their virtue than to ſpoil their beauty.

Beſides virtue in deformity, there is alſo ſuperannuated diſcretion; whatever turn a woman might formerly have had for love, on her drawing near to forty, and reading in the looks of men, that virtue would become her, ſhe immediately models herſelf accordingly.

But there is one thing in this ſuperannuated virtue which I cannot endure. They who are poſſeſſed of it, are continually talking of it, and making compariſons of their morals, with the diſſolute part of their

their ſex. They ſeem to forget that all the difference lies in ten or fifteen years.

However innumerable are the exceptions to this rule, ſome women here have as little ſelf government in their advanced age, as in the fire and impetuoſity of youth, and theſe women at Paris are pointed at, and treated with the utmoſt contempt.

LETTER LXII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi, *at* Paris.

Milan.

THIS is the country of proceſſions, images, feſtivals and burials; but, in magnificence, the opera beats all religious ceremonies. Moſt of the nobility have their theatrical houſe, which they call a box, where they live, eat, play and drink; at leaſt I have ſeen many a one napping there: indeed it is highly entertaining, and the pleaſure makes it very well worth while to have a habitation ſo near the ſtage. Here, as at Turin, two or three *Caſtrati* ſtalk on the ſtage, effeminately thrilling forth their amorous ſufferings. But it is not muſic alone which brings many to theſe places of reſort. Both ſexes have a greater concern to carry on there. They are ſo very commodious, that I am aſſured the homage of love has been paid there perſonally, and that the original of operas is performed in theſe boxes.

The ladies of Milan are very gallant, and not the moſt cautious in their intrigues. This they call the French way of life; they might as well call it the Turkiſh way: in libertiniſm they go beyond the women at Paris; as, in copying, the ſex in Italy always ſurpaſſes its originals.

The carnival, that ſeaſon of phrenzy, is limited in all European nations. At Milan the revelling laſts four days longer. This perhaps, thou wilt ſay, is

is only a trifle; but let me tell thee it is a matter of weight in regard to the general morality; crowds of people reſorting hither from all cities in Italy, for the ſake of enjoying this licentiouſneſs the longer. Whilſt in this ſeaſon the Chriſtian Mandarins in other ſtates are exhorting the faithful, not to forget *that they are but duſt*; thoſe of Milan, by plunging themſelves in diverſions and pleaſures, remember only that they are men.

LETTER LXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-touna, *at Pekin.*

Paris.

THE other day I was reading an epiſtle in the beginning of a book lately printed, and dedicated to an European monarch: it was ſo ſtuffed with ſuch fulſome praiſes, and ſuch extravagant expreſſions, that I make no doubt but this monarch, with all the flattery he is uſed to, muſt himſelf have bluſhed at reading them. All his vices are there changed into virtues, and his weakneſſes converted into magnanimous qualities. Such an epiſtle is ſufficient to diſfigure the whole body of modern annals. Two centuries hence, the hiſtorians will be quite at a loſs to reconcile the diſorders of this prince's reign, and the miſchiefs they have occaſioned to Europe, with theſe ſuppoſed virtues and amiable qualities.

When nothing good can be ſaid of a ſovereign, why do they take any notice of him?

Wherefore do they impoſe thus on poſterity by praiſes, to which the times when they were written will give the lye? Hence ariſe thoſe perpetual contradictions in the hiſtory of Europe. The ſame prince whom one author treats with contempt on account of his vices, ſhall in another be ſet off with ſo many virtues as not to be diſtinguiſhable.

It

It is ſtill a queſtion in Europe, whether Lewis, whom ſome authors dignify with the name of *Great*, was not in effect as little as he has been repreſented by other pens.

This inconveniency is not known in China; there hiſtorical truth is never diſguiſed. The Mandarins appointed to write the annals of Europe, are allowed to ſet down the facts in the naked truth.

Methinks I am within the ſanctuary of truth, and live in the freeſt country on earth, when I read theſe words in the Pekin journal. "The Emperor "lately committed an action beneath his rank; "the day following he was in ſuch a paſſion as not "to know himſelf: or on ſuch an occaſion he o-"mitted doing juſtice; on another, when it was "expected he would have ſhewn clemency, he car-"ried his reſentment to the utmoſt ſeverity, &c. "&c."

An author here would be irretrievably loſt, ſhould he take it into his head thus to publiſh the plain truth. Accordingly no ſtreſs can be laid on the annals of this part of the globe: the hiſtory of Europe is but a heap of fables and artful diſguiſes.

LETTER LXIV.

The Same, to the Mandarin Catao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

I Have ſpoken to thee of the plays at Paris, but without ſaying any thing of theatres, which are of great antiquity; for thoſe inſtitutions which render the Europeans ſo depraved, are not their own invention, but of very antient origin.

The Greeks and Romans, after corrupting all nations, eſtabliſhed cuſtoms for corrupting themſelves: yet is the theatre ſaid to have been the temple of morality, the ſchool of wiſdom, whereby the people

people learning to depart from vice, by the exhibitions of its bad consequences, improved in virtue; but this school, if ever it was a school, has greatly degenerated: it is at present, a scene of profaneness: one step farther, and it will become a place of public prostitution.

The revolutions of the universe having buried both the dramas and dramatis personæ under the same ruins, there was an end of plays; and the only scene in the world was the world itself. The different nations however, on becoming policed anew, were for reviving the ages of literature, and this they imagined could not be done without acting plays.

France opened its theatre with celestial pieces; the characters were God and the saints, the prophets, the angels, the arch-angels, Christ's mother, Christ himself, became actors: and these personages, though so nearly allied to paradise, were clapped or hissed, according as they acted their parts. I have been told that the Paris pit, as indeed it has no regard to persons, often hissed the Eternal Father.

But the mysteries of the Christian religion not being found entertaining enough, the characters of men were brought on the stage, men being always more ridiculous than doctrines; the public administration was also exhibited, and the system of the state set forth in farces. When the King of France had a mind to declare war against any power, and more taxes were wanting, he used to send for the players; and gave them an argument for a play which they were to act. Thus, though the people began with laughing, the conclusion was to pay the tax; and even this had still something more diverting than at present, when the only prologue to the the tax is an arret, a piece of itself insupportably dull and jejune, and pleasing only to the gatherers.

The ministers of state and the grandees were also personated, without being able to help themselves; the

the players having the King's permiſſion and privilege to expoſe their ridicules in this public manner. At preſent, cuſtoms, and the paſſions in general, are brought on the ſtage.

The theatre has two faces; ſometimes its appearance is quite ſad and melancholy, even to the very looks of the actors. The dagger and poiſon cover it with corpſes; nothing but monuments, ſepulchres, murders and aſſaſſinations. The next day the decoration is quite the reverſe, the theatre is like a ball room, rings with frolic and mirth, the actors are all ſprightly and in high ſpirits; their ſolemn carriage is turned into hilarity and buffoonry. Yeſterday they were ſovereigns and noblemen, to day they are harlequins and dancers.

Death and jocularity may be ſaid to take their turn in this theatre.

They who calculate every thing at Paris, affirm, that annually the dagger and poiſon carry off at this playhouſe, three hundred Emperors, as many Kings, with five or ſix hundred princes; beſides above five hundred virgins raviſhed, and twice the number of marriages. Though this be not the land of miracles, it is the land of reſurrections; actors after having been killed times innumerable, always come to life again to kill the public.

LETTER LXV.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is not in the univerſe a more induſtrious people for deſtroying themſelves than the Europeans: their progreſſes in the art of exterminating one another, are really amazing. The Greeks and Romans, with all their devaſtations, had but very ſcanty notions in diſpeopling ſtates; whereas the moderns make an end of them at once. The former were whole ages in deſolating a country; at preſent one campaign does the buſineſs.

As

As mankind grew thin by quarrels; helmets, cuiraſſes, and other defenſive: armour were invented: but it being found ſcandalous to go to war and not die in the field, they were laid aſide.

Antiently darts were the only weapons uſed in battle; but this way of killing one another being thought too ſlow, pikes were added; and on a ſecond thought, that this was killing one another at too great a diſtance, the ſword came in uſe as a ſhorter weapon; and this cloſe fighting was in time improved by the bayonet, which alſo gives larger wounds.

All theſe however were but very defective branches in the art of deſtruction. No ſooner had a ray of light broke on this part of the univerſe, than gunpowder was invented; a moſt admirable diſcovery for nations to finiſh each other; hitherto ſtrength and courage were requiſite in war, but now having powder enough will do. This notable diſcovery led the way to the happy invention of the muſquet and piſtol.

At length the human mind, ever ſtudious of improvements, by a noble ſtretch of its faculties, invented the cannon, a glorious monument of human ſagacity! With the muſquet and piſtol a man could kill only one of his fellow creatures; whereas with cannon he can ſweep off a hundred. Fortreſſes now are become no ſafeguard; the cannon battering down the walls, make a breach for the enemy.

In the mean while, the art of bombarding was riſing to perfection, and ſuch progreſſes did the Europeans make in it, that they are able to deſtroy a large a city, with all its inhabitants, in leſs time than the offended Deity takes to exterminate a profligate people, by an earthquake, the inſtrument of his vengeance.

Soon the infernal machine, a name of all others the fitteſt for it, made its appearance: all theſe inſtruments of human wickedneſs are kept in murderous edifices, here called arſenals; each ſtate has

within itſelf wherewith to deſtroy ten nations; and being ſo well furniſhed for miſchief, they take care theſe deſtructive machines ſhall not lie idle.

Farther freſh improvements are daily making, and confirmed by experiments. I was yeſterday at the trial of a cannon, which fired ſixty times in a minute; an admirable invention for haſtening the end of the world! It is only plying it briſkly, and the nations will no longer complain of being too full of people.

I have computed that a battery of a hundred of theſe cannons will, at the rate above-mentioned, fire eight millions ſix hundred and forty thouſand ſhot within twenty four hours, which is the preciſe number for getting rid of a whole nation in one day.

LETTER LXVI.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

A Diſpute has lately ariſen here, which makes a great deal of noiſe, for it proceeds from ſounds. The point is, whether the Italian muſic be preferable to the French. As the debate relates only to the manner of affecting the air, the learned diſſertations publiſhed on this ſubject tend merely to increaſe its agitation.

The diſpute firſt broke out in ariettes and ſongs, and for a long time was carried on in ſmall detachments of ballads; till afterwards whole bodies of national muſic declared themſelves, and the action became general. Each party collected ſo many *chromas* and and *ſemi-chromas*, as to be able to make volumes, ſhining with an erudition equally curious and inſignificant.

It appears that the French have loſt ſeveral muſical pitched battles, and the Italians have totally defeated them, by a great ſuperiority of ſolos and concertos.

concertos. Sometimes a congreſs has been talked of for an amicable accommodation of this important diſpute; but no agreement has ever been brought about. The miſchief is, that the caſe is always referred to incompetent judges, I mean foreign nations, who know nothing of either of theſe muſics.

A writer of Geneva, who at firſt charmed the public with works becoming a real philoſopher, who has ſince wrote romances, and perhaps will conclude his literary courſe with almanacks, affirms, that whatever airs the Paris opera may give itſelf, the French have no ſuch thing as muſic among them; and theſe, to demonſtrate how groſly he is miſtaken have anſwered him with ſongs.

The ſubſtance of this famous quarrel is, to know whether the Chineſe ſhould ſing like the Germans, or the French like the Turks? but neither party recurs to the original principle; the point is, whether the Italian muſic, to which moſt are inclined to give the preference above any other, contains all the expreſſions together with all the accents of nature?

LETTER LXVII.

The Same, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-ſe, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IN France religion is ſo far from being a check to luxury, that it extends every branch of it. Moſt of the houſes are furniſhed with Chriſtian virtues.

Some people here ſhall have ten thouſand crowns worth of crucifixion, and in the houſes of others you may ſee evangelical humility to the amount of one hundred thouſand livres; the apartments are hung with apoſtles and ſaints of both ſexes, to an immenſe value. Many a Magdalene is there, whoſe picture is in ſuch a high taſte of luxury, as to be above price.

I lately saw the whole Christian religion in luxury, or a compleat set of furniture in a French nobleman's hotel: all the pictures being originals, the connoisseurs esteem it a master-piece of Christian ostentation.

The creation decorates the first apartment. On one side is Adam and Eve in the terrestrial paradise; on the other, the fall of the latter, whence arose original sin. Cain's fratricide is expressed with great skill and taste; the deluge is by a masterly hand; all the beasts of the ark have a fine effect, and contribute to form a most noble piece of furniture. The tower of Babel, with the confusion of languages, is executed in all possible order.

The second is hung with the people of God. The golden calf, with the successive history of its idolatry, is divided into several compartments. Here Abraham and Moses make the principal figure; the latter going into Egypt to deliver his brethren from their rigorous captivity, is an invaluable piece.

The laws of the decalogue, which contain the whole plan for regulating the excesses of the human heart, are finely represented; and Moses shews a sense of the dignity of his office.

The luxury of the third consists of the Eternal's ark, the temple of God, and the history of Solomon.

The fourth is adorned with the nativity of Christ, the adoration of the magi, his death and resurrection; particularly strangers behold with admiration a descent from the cross, as the Christians call it, which is a most splendid luxury.

This nobleman's steward told me that he had more than once been offered fifty thousand crowns for it.

Several *ecce homo*'s have I seen ghastly with wounds, the produce of which, if sold, would heal those of many an indigent family; but nobody will part with these, that they may not seem to degenerate from the luxury of their ancestors.

Some

Some heads of families have been known, when dying, to forbid any diminution of this holy oftentation, thus perpetuating in their family Chriſtian luxury and domeſtic penury.

Don't imagine that this religious vanity is to be found only among decent and moral people; it is no leſs common among profeſſed libertines: there's not an Atheiſt, if of any taſte, who, when at home, does not ſee himſelf ſurrounded with patriarchs, prophets, and ſaints.

LETTER LXVIII.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE French may have as much wit as they pleaſe. Learning is prohibited among them; accordingly, their deepeſt erudition is no more than a ſuperficial knowledge.

Should a literato ſet up for a genius, and riſe above the common knowledge, he would ſoon be taken down, and made to keep within the general ignorance. This is by no means owing to a want of capacity; for the French were they not curbed, would go as far as their neighbours in the moſt abſtracted ſciences.

The ſource of this ignorance lies deep, it derives from the very conſtitution. All would be loſt ſhould the nation once come to think geometrically, as thereby it would acquire a genius for demonſtration, which this government can better do without. Its deſpotiſm has hitherto found its account in the national ignorance, and it does not know how public knowledge would ſuit with it.

Every thing is of conſequence in a ſtate where the prerogative is arbitrary. For inſtance, it is not a matter of indifference to France whether the ſun moves round the earth, or the earth round the ſun, becauſe its phyſical errors are connected with its

political ſyſtem, and dependent on its conſtitution.

If a man of learning goes about to open his countrymen's eyes, care is immediately taken to ſhut his mouth. A philoſopher would needs prove that there were irregularities in the courſe of the heavenly bodies; but he was made ſenſible that it was not his buſineſs to correct them. He was baniſhed.

The bonzes and church-men, who are the guardians of public ignorance, would loſe their authority, ſhould they allow of indiſcriminate knowledge; they eſpecially keep an eye againſt any great progreſs in phyſics, as leading to the knowledge of God. The keeping of this gate is their main care; for the veil once rent, little or no power or influence would remain to them. Inſtead of giving law to others, they would be obliged to receive it; beſides the trouble of being learned, as then they muſt be; and ignorance is much more eaſy. The men of this claſs would be under a neceſſity of continually haraſſing their minds; whereas to know nothing, requires no trouble. Such a change would force them from that ſtate of inactivity which the bonzes delight in; and never would they have embraced this profeſſion, had it been attended with labour and ſtudy.

The ſchools are forbidden to go above half-way in the ſciences; their inſtitution binds them to make only ſmatterers, who are in reality ignoramuſes.

The climate, which is here blended with politicks and religion, is ſaid to hinder the French from being profound: but this I can hardly believe, as amidſt the general reſtriction, ſome writings, expoſing the government and clergy, make their way into the public, and prove, that, with liberty, the French would think as deeply and accurately as any other European nation.

LET-

LETTER LXIX.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi *at* Paris.

Milan.

HAVING given thee an account of the women and the opera of Milan, I muſt not forget its temples. God is here entertained with a royal magnificence; very ſplendid palaces have been built for him; but that is all; nay, they ſeem to have provided ſuch gorgeous manſions for him, only by way of contempt, moſt of the churches being made places of rendezvous for love-intrigues; and to be ſeen, or ſee, is what draws moſt of the congregations thither.

Religion, which among this ſuperſtitious people is an ingredient in every thing, forwards the intrigues of illicit love. Divine worſhip, in Italy, is of ſuch uſe to debauchery, that with no religion there would be leſs vice. Set aſide Sunday maſſes, and the anniverſaries of ſaints on working days, the gallants would be ſadly put to their ſhifts. Domeſtic rigour owing to the jealouſy of the climate, might keep wives and daughters in order; but fathers, mothers, and huſbands, are quite bewildered by ſermons, veſpers, and benedictions.

Thus religion, the only curb for preventing a profligacy of manners, is made an inſtrument for corrupting them.

LETTER LXX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Superintendant of Religion at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE other day the chevalier led me into a Chriſtian pagod, where was a vaſt crowd, it being the anniverſary feſtival of the idol of that place.

I was reflecting on the zeal of ſuch a concourſe of people, when a young man of about twenty ſeven years of age, cloathed in black, with a ſhirt over his robe, making his way through the crowd, came and ſeated himſelf in a little wooden nich, near where I was ſtanding. He had a freſh complexion, and all the ſigns of a ſanguine conſtitution.

He was ſcarce ſeated, when a young lady, riſing from her place, went and kneeled before him, and began to whiſper in his ear. The lady was extremely pretty; and tho' her face was covered, the young man, with whom ſhe was diſcourſing, could ſee a great part of her boſom, on which her head leaned; ſo that ſhe could not breathe without his perceiving the motion of her breaſt. My companion, obſerving me to be under ſome amaze, ſaid, I ſee this interview ſurpriſes you, but it will ſurpriſe you much more when I tell you, that it is one of the principal myſteries of our religion.

The box you ſee there is a confeſſional, the young fellow in it is a confeſſor, and the lady a penitent. She is now going to accuſe herſelf of her frailties, and lay open to him her failings; he will call her to an account for her very thoughts, and inquire into her deſires. This is called the ſeat of penance.

This is but a modern ſacrament, ſcarce above five or ſix hundred years ſtanding? yet is it not the leſs divine, for God is this moment coming down from heaven, like a dove, on this nich. He will looſen the confeſſor's tongue, to abſolve the penitent

tent from all her ſins; and in caſe he has reaſons for not doing ſo, the Holy Spirit, after coming on a fleeveleſs errand, will return up to heaven till freſh orders. No religion in the world affords a more wonderful art. Every thing in this tribunal is ſupernatural. The confeſſor muſt forget his being a man, and the penitent muſt beware of remembering that ſhe is a woman.

That is, ſaid I, a ſurpriſing ſacrament indeed, for I did not imagine that ſuch things could have been forgotten; but, added I, I can't conceive how the confeſſor does to avoid pronouncing the name of indecent things. Oh! he is put to no trouble about that; there is no need of mincing ſuch pronunciations, for there is nothing more indecent among us than confeſſion. A man who, in any other place than a confeſſional, ſhould dare to put ſuch queſtions to a woman, would be looked on as a vile fellow; and a woman returning the like anſwers, would be deſpiſed as an abandoned proſtitute.

For inſtance, a confeſſor, in aſking his penitent about her temptations, inquires ſtrictly how often ſhe has been tempted? Whether her yielding was not attended with a great revolution in her nature? Whether the ſight of a handſome gentleman has not made an impreſſion on her? Whether this impreſſion did not produce an act? Whether this act was very ſenſible? Whether her dreams at night were not voluptuous? Whether theſe images cauſed in her any great emotions? Whether ſhe did not perceive, at her awaking, that the dream had produced a reality?

If his penitent accuſes herſelf of having yielded to an intrigue, he muſt know the time, place, and circumſtances. If ſhe owns an infidelity to her huſband, he inquires how often? Whether the pleaſure was very ſenſible to her? Whether ſhe always retained her reaſon? Whether ſhe did not fall into a ſwoon? The ſacrament goes on, and God finiſhes the remainder.

Sir, ſaid I, has the devil no ſhare in this myſtery? and does he never turn confeſſor among the Chriſtians? for in my mind this ſacrament gives him fair play.

Reflections ariſe here from all quarters. It is a defect in a religion to expoſe its miniſters too much. The guides of men, in all ſects, are themſelves but men; the office, with which religion inveſts them, changes not the heart. They, whoſe calling devotes them to the Deity, have not received from nature the privilege of inſenſibility. However holy a worſhip be, it is relying too much on it, to expoſe its miniſters to continual temptations, and expect that they ſhall tread them under foot.

Decency is of an order ſuperior to thoſe of any religion; or rather without decency there can be no religion, it being the baſis on which all moral virtues reſt. As a relation of the pleaſures annexed to concupiſcence makes impure ſenſations, it were better to let them be buried in eternal oblivion. They are putrid carcaſes, which, vitiating the air, infect thoſe who remove them from the tombs. There are ſins to reveal which is committing ſeveral ſins.

In this Chriſtian ſacrament, innocence is generally expoſed to manifeſt danger. Ten confeſſions teach a girl more than the licentiouſneſs of the world: for to know whether ſhe is ſuſceptible of the temptations ſuſpected in her, ſhe muſt be queſtioned; and theſe very queſtionings teach her, or put her on gueſſing what ſhe had no thought of before.

It is alledged that the ſhame annexed to confeſſion, is a ſtrong reſtraint on women; this is a miſtake, and ſhews the Chriſtian moraliſts to know little of the human heart, which habituates itſelf to every thing; it is only the firſt avowal gives pain. A woman having once ſaid that ſhe has yielded to libidinous deſires, will afterwards repeat the like a hundred times, without the leaſt bluſh. They inſiſt that this mortification is of itſelf a ſacrifice.

But

But why, particularly, make choice of auricular confeſſion? Cannot a perſon humble herſelf before God, but a fellow creature muſt be witneſs of her devotion? The confeſſor has no buſineſs in the confeſſion; for, if made to a man, it is of no effect; if to God, there is no need of a confeſſor.

I don't know any contrivance which could exceed this ſacrament, for filling the earth with all ſorts of enormities. The Chriſtians look on it as a ſponge, which at one bruſh totally obliterates ſins: remembring to have confeſſed themſelves, they forget that that they are ſinners. Penance keeps them from being penitent; they account a performance of the penance a total diſcharge of the debt.

There is more vanity in the confeſſor, than humility in the ſacrament; he talks as if he held the keys of heaven in his hands. The power he aſſumes is beyond that of all the potentates in the univerſe. Kings can make men happy only for a time, and imperfectly ſo; the confeſſor makes them completely happy throughout all eternity. How could it ever be conceived that God ſhould have communicated this attribute, the greateſt of all, to a contemptible mortal? All that the Mandarins of this ſort have to anſwer is, that it is a myſtery: it is ſo to be ſure; but the greateſt myſtery is, that it could ever be admitted by reaſonable men.

This Chriſtian inſtitution, however, is far from being uſeleſs: it ſerves to uphold that aſcendancy which the Chriſtian pagod has always affected over ſubjects and ſovereigns. Through it the bonzes and prieſts come at the knowledge of intrigues, and ſee into all the hidden weakneſſes of the heart; this ſacrament draws aſide the veil from the ſecrets both of families and courts.

Another prodigy in this myſtery is the metamorphoſis which it cauſes in princes. To me it ſeems very ſtrange, that a ſovereign ſhall be ſueing for the remiſſion of his ſins, at the feet of one of his ſubjects, and a ſinful man like himſelf.

LET-

LETTER LXXI.

The Same, to the Mandarin Prime Miniſter, at Pekin.

Paris.

THE morals of the eaſtern princes are not known to their ſubjects; the ſeraglio is ſeparated from the empire by an impenetrable barrier: the ſovereign there may give himſelf up to voluptuous deſires, as much as he pleaſes, without his example having any bad effect on the ſtate. The only witneſſes of their irregularities are eunuchs, ſlaves to their deſires, and purchaſed for the moſt infamous purpoſes.

In the weſt, the morals of Kings are expoſed to every curious eye: their behaviour is tranſparent. There is nothing done in any part of the royal houſe, but is known; and fancy, without ſtopping in the antechamber, flies even to their bed. At Marli you are ſhewn the favourite ſlave's apartment, the very chamber where the King gratifies himſelf with her. That which ſhe has at Verſailles is known to every body, it is the firſt thing ſhewn to ſtrangers.

The little apartments, with the ſuppers there, and what follows, have been the ſubject of many memoirs. There is not a man at Paris ever ſo little acquainted with the court-intrigues, who does not know what paſſes in thoſe receſſes.

Laſt Sunday I was preſent at the opening of the billet of Verſailles in the great walk of the *Thuilleries*, which was done in the preſence of ſome hundreds. It is a journal of every the moſt important court-tranſactions in the enſuing week. An old half-pay officer, who has had the publication of it for twenty years paſt, after putting on his ſpectacles, and twice ſpitting to clear his voice, read as follows.

"To-morrow,

" To morrow, being Monday, the King holds " a great council.

" Tueſday, reviews the houſehold.

" Wedneſday, gives audience to foreign am- " baſſadors.

" Thurſday, goes a hunting.

" Friday, aſſiſts at a ſolemn Te Deum, as a " thankſgiving for the proſperity of his arms, " both by ſea and land.

" Saturday in the evening, comes to the " M——— at Belleveue, where he will ſup and " lye."

This may be called keeping a whole kingdom in waiting.

From the very nature of monarchical government, it is impoſſible for the monarch to follow his irregular deſires without being imitated by his ſubjects. His example is a centre to which all the actions of private perſons gravitate.

The hiſtory of French voluptuouſneſs is founded on that of their Kings. Till Francis I. the French were rather gallant than debauched. This prince, who kept miſtreſſes openly, and died of a diſeaſe called ſcandalous, from the conſequence of his debaucheries opened the door to libertiniſm; yet there were ſome remains of modeſty, for it is not at once that a people becomes corrupted.

Henry IV. who made no ſecret of his amours, inflamed the nation's deſires to great exceſs.

Lewis XIV. being a voluptuous prince, and impetuous in his paſſions, by openly taking away the wives of his ſubjects, put the finiſhing hand to debauchery, ſo that under his reign it was almoſt general. His example being followed by the ſucceeding government, depravation overflowed all bounds.

There is not a woman here, and I ſpeak even of thoſe of ſome reputation for modeſty, who does not look on diſhonouring her huſband as a mere trifle. They imagine themſelves warranted by the ſove-

reign's

reign's example, which, in a monarchial ſtate, juſtifies every thing even the moſt flagrant guilt.

LETTER LXXII.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE moſt difficult of all ſciences in Europe, is to know that one knows nothing: yet is there another rather more ſo, and this is to doubt of every thing.

In China we ſhould laugh at a philoſopher pretending to doubt that we exiſt, and ſaying that ſuch a thing might be, but it is not impoſſible that it might not be; and this is the uſual talk of theſe Pyrrhonic ſages.

It is agreed all over the world, that light makes day; yet here are ſome learned men, who will prove that light makes night.

This ſcience has cauſed many revolutions in the human mind: books without number have been compoſed in proof that we are to doubt of every thing; and at length they are come to agree in nothing.

Great labour was required to demoliſh all principles, and accuſtom the imagination to float continually between truth and falſehood.

This ſcience here has an influence on all concerns of civil life. A general uncertainty has ſpread through the nation, that it never knows what it would have. This dubitation has even reached the prince's cabinet, and preſides at the council-board. One deliberation is ever contradicted by another. The great men heſitate between the ſyſtem of peace and the ſcheme for continuing the war. They are at a loſs which to cloſe with, and the miniſters are ever in ſuſpenſe about what meaſures they ſhall take.

This

This fluctuation interferes alſo in trades, and has got footing in the concerns of private houſes. A father of a family never knows what he ſhall do with his children. He firſt propoſes ſuch a calling for them, and ſoon after turns them over to another.

LETTER LXXIII.

The ſame, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

EVERY courier brings an account of the defeat of one part or other of the French army now in Germany; and this is not for want of numbers, that army alone being ſufficient to overrun Europe. A more dangerous war for France than that which its enemies are carrying on againſt her, is the diviſions among her generals; their jealouſies, piques and jarrings do infinite hurt to the monarchy. Amidſt the private contentions of generals, the nation loſes battles. The political quarrels of ſovereigns are nothing in compariſon to thoſe differences; expedients are ſometimes found for reconciling the intereſt of princes, but the animoſities of generals admit of no pacification. When two are ſent abroad to fight the enemies of the ſtate the firſt thing they do is to thwart one another. There is always one who will pretend to be the moſt knowing, and conſequently is ever finding fault with what the other does. The point who ſhall be maſter, is the great concern, and to it the intereſts of the crown are ever ſacrificed.

The worſt news either of them can hear is, that his colegue has gained an advantage over the enemy: but, on being informed that by ſome blunder he has got a plunge he can't forbear ſhewing his joy. Farther they both carry on contrivances againſt each other, each endeavouring to make his rival fall into ſome ſnare. Sometimes they expoſe each other in printed pamphlets; and though ſuch libels

libels are openly known to France and all Europe, I do not ſee any puniſhment follows. Here they put a man to death for killing another, whilſt nothing is done to a general who, in only one action, has been the cauſe of twenty thouſand being butchered.

In Aſia a general's head anſwers for the events of war; whereas in Europe, he is not ſo much as anſwerable for his evil intentions. Should he want conduct, and thus occaſion the loſs of a whole army, his only puniſhment is to be recalled. Had it not been for the avarice and monopolies of a French general, the war in the north would probably have been over: the enemy had run themſelves into ſuch a bad ſituation, that to have taken advantage of it muſt have brought about a glorious peace; but a German army purchaſed its liberty of him, and renewed the war. As to this venal French general, after ſo baſely ſelling the intereſt of his crown, he quietly retired with ſeveral millions, part of which he has laid out in paying his debts and building fine houſes. At preſent he is in a province, continually giving entertainments and living in ſplendor; and thus he enjoys, even with applauſe, an overgrown fortune, acquired at the expence of France's choiceſt blood.

What ſayeſt thou to the King of France's clemency, whoſe moderation is ſuch, as to ſee his people butchered without mercy, and not revenge ſuch voluntary effuſions of blood? In China, ſuch an Emperor would be called cruel and barbarous. Were the heads of more generals ſtriken off, it would ſave many of the ſubjects theirs.

LETTER LXXIV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi, *at* Port L'Orient.

Venice.

I AM got to Venice, that is, in the middle of the ſea, in a huge ſhip built of ſtone, and kept at anchor by art and nature for above thirteen centuries.

The Europeans are oddities in every thing; rich and fertile lands they leave to birds of prey and wild beaſts, whilſt they themſelves dwell in unhealthy marſhes, with nothing to live on but ſhell-fiſh.

You may well conceive that this place does not abound in conveniencies, a ſhip being at beſt but an uncomfortable place. Venice wants the moſt eſſential thing in life, I mean freſh water. Then there is no going into the ſtreets without a boat, unleſs, like a ſaint the Chriſtians talk much of, one can walk on the water.

If you have a viſit to pay, the compaſs and winds muſt be conſulted; ſo that very often the viſit muſt be delayed till there is hope of an eaſy paſſage. One may indeed walk over a great part of Venice along quays built for that purpoſe; but this is a very great inconveniency, for you muſt be continually going up and down bridges. Every one here keeps his equipage at anchor, which is a kind of tomb hung with black, where they regularly bury themſelves five or ſix hours a-day.

One would think this city was built on ſprings, its pagods and palaces periodically ſinking and riſing from under the waters. Sometimes Venice is all ſea, and there are other times when it is almoſt dry land. The Venetians ſeem to be ſo afraid of being joined to the continent, that they are daily inventing new engines for keeping their ſtate afloat.

On

On entering this city, one inhales a ſoft air, extremely dangerous to virtue; the whole city is a gaudy ſcene of ſhows, entertainments and diverſions, all alike frivolous.

In other European ſtates, the carnival laſts only a few days; here it is allowed to be made ſix months out of the twelve. The republic licenſes it, and, at the ſame time, the going in diſguiſe, which is no bad contrivance for the more diffuſe practice of immorality.

LETTER LXXV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Cotho-yu-ſe *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IT is a misfortune to a nation when a prince has paſſions, and a much greater when his miniſters ſee into them. No ſooner did the reigning prince's fondneſs for women break out, than all about him ſet themſelves to commend this propenſity. It might, perhaps, have died in the birth, had not thoſe who are neareſt his perſon, ſtudiouſly made uſe of every way for encouraging it. On fixing his choice, all places rang with praiſes of it: flattery juſtified it, and made a virtue of guilt; there was not in the whole kingdom ſo much as one honeſt man to repreſent to him the danger to which he expoſed himſelf, the ſtate, and his people. Wretched is the condition of kings ever excited to vice, without one friend to ſhew them the path of virtue! This is owing to the ſovereign's lying ſo open when he gives himſelf up to that paſſion. He is gained through her who has already gained him; favours of all ſorts flow more eaſily in this new channel: any thing is obtained, becauſe the favourite can aſk any thing. Beſides, the diſorders ariſing in ſociety from the ſame paſſion go unpuniſhed; for how can a prince puniſh a licentiouſneſs, of which he himſelf

ſelf ſets the example? Theſe are advantages which a virtuous prince will not hear of; he is not to be come at by ſuch infamous ways; and the diſorder of this paſſion he puniſhes with the greater ſeverity, as he himſelf ſubdues its impulſes.

I have carefully read over the hiſtory of moſt European governments, and find, that the more their princes have indulged a propenſity to women, the greater has been the profligacy of the people, and confuſion of public affairs.

LETTER LXXVI.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

I Cannot forbear, dear Kié-tou-na, diſcloſing my apprehenſions to thee. I ſhudder at the thoughts of being in a kingdom utterly void of liberty, where every thing, even the voice itſelf, is enſlaved; nay, here you are not ſo much as allowed to think.

I am to inform myſelf of the government of theſe people, the manners both of the nation and prince. In order to this, I muſt, in ſome meaſure, lay myſelf open; I muſt aſk and inquire, and in this lies my greateſt danger; it may create a ſuſpicion of me, and here all the interval between ſuſpicion and conviction, is the accuſation.

China has no relation to France; their intereſts are diametrically oppoſite. Yet were it known that I am come to inſpect into the conſtitution and uſages of France, I ſhould be taken up and buried for ever in a loathſome priſon.

It is terrible to think, that one ſingle enemy, or even an indiſcreet babler, may utterly ruin me. A man's freedom in France hangs by ſo ſlender a thread, that a falſe information always preponderates againſt it.

Yet

Yet this government is not like that of Turkey, where the prince's will is the ſupreme law. Here every one has a trial, but it never comes on till the party has rotted in priſon. It is very ſeldom that ſuch unhappy perſons are diſcharged but by death.

I may perhaps reaſſume this point, as of the higheſt importance; for where the ſubject's liberty is not ſecured, inſtead of any government political or civil, there can be nothing but tyranny or deſpotiſm.

LETTER LXXVII.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE Chevalier, who had ſome time before promiſed to introduce me into a ſociety of Paris wits, lately carried me to a man of letters, who has a meeting of literati at his houſe, moſt of them authors, or affecting to be thought ſuch. The company was mixed, conſiſting, to my ſurprize, of as many learned women as men of letters; for in Europe the caſe is quite different from Africa, where our ladies being confined at home, can diſtinguiſh themſelves only by domeſtic qualifications: here they are allowed to aſpire to the principal poſts of the republic of letters, and enter the liſts of genius againſt the other ſex.

The Chevalier and I took care ſo to place ourſelves in this aſſembly, that we could hear every thing ſaid in it, without being much taken notice of.

I expected an exquiſite converſation, and was preparing my mind before-hand for receiving the different impreſſions of the brilliant ſallies, which were to raiſe my admiration; but, inſtead of this, the company talked only of common things and in common terms, intermixed with much vulgar phraſeology.

Theſe

Theſe men of talents having thus ſpoken an hour, without ſaying any thing, Sir, ſaid I to my guide, are theſe your great wits! The title of fine-genius ſeems to me eaſily purchaſed here; and if my ſelf-love be not miſtaken, I think, that I myſelf might put in for that honour.

The Chevalier, by his acquaintance with moſt of theſe literary perſons, being well qualified to give me a farther knowledge of them, Sir, continued I to him, who is that long viſag'd lady with pretty fine eyes? That, ſaid, he, is the Princeſs of R—b—c. She is a patroneſs of the Lyric arts, muſic and declamation, and on this account is reckoned a kind of author; for at Paris protection goes for compoſition. Methinks, replied I, this princeſs is a little out of place in this company. Very true, replied he, but our women of tip-top quality imagine, that, by aſſociating with men of talents, the world looks on them as geniuſes; and thus they often debaſe themſelves by the company they keep. Thus ſhe, we are talking of, is ever among players and ſingers, a ſet of people whom no perſon of credit ſhould ſee but on the ſtage; whereas they have free acceſs to her houſe; and of this the ſpirit of ſlander has made a handle, to ſay, that with them ſhe goes beyond repreſentation.

Who, continned I, is that young lady next to the princeſs? She is of ſome rank, but it was her misfortune to make a kind of epigram, which took very much, and this trifling ſucceſs has turned her brain: ſhe fancies herſelf ſuperior to all the poetical geniuſes of antiquity; ſhe talks and writes in metre, and if ſhe favours a lover with a letter it is in *bouts-rimés*, which puts them to their wit's-end; plain proſe being what they want from her, and not ambiguous verſes.

Can you tell me who that is on her left hand, I mean what branch of literature is her favourite ſtudy? She is, anſwered he, profoundly verſed in the abſtract ſcience of amorous tales: ſhe is looked upon

upon as a wit, having written a romance; but the public will ſoon be undeceived, for ſhe is going to print it.

And that fourth, ſaid I, who ſits next to the gentleman of the houſe, and ſeems in a brown ſtudy, who is ſhe? O! anſwered he, nothing would ſerve her but ſhe muſt learn Greek, for our ladies here pretend to be better acquainted with it than the men: ſhe is infatuated with Homer, and threatens the public with a new tranſlation; this was her chief view in learning Greek, but unluckily ſhe has got to learn Latin and French.

Now for the gentlemen, interrupted I; I do not greatly like your literary ladies. Who is that man facing us ſo very thoughtful? He is one, anſwered the Chevalier, who ſhould have ſome genius, having written a book called the *Mind*, but this Mind ſeems to have deprived him of his judgment; he has been unmercifully perſecuted, and the government has even appointed a ſpecial council to try him. His friends adviſed him to except againſt ignorant judges, who, as ſuch, cannot be qualified for trying the mind. But the author has been found, contrary to the laws of erudition, to deal in the finances, and, which is much againſt all the rules of literature, to have four-ſcore-thouſand livres a year. Now it is a maxim in France, that there can be no mind worth ſuch an income. He has been obliged to retract, and own before an auguſt court, that his mind had not common ſenſe, and thereby he has in form of law given up part of himſelf.

Who is that other gentleman next to him? He is alſo an author. Some time ago he wrote a tragedy called Dionyſius the Tyrant, which had ſome ſucceſs; and ſince this metrical tyranny he has publiſhed ſeveral proſaic tyrannies, and at preſent every month tyrannizes over the public in a tyrannical pamphlet. A very tyrannical writer indeed! ſaid I. Dionyſius himſelf could not exceed him.

But

But who is that little man, ſo cold and yet ſo conceited, with his dizzy look, on the left almoſt falling us? Why he is a paultry ſcribler, whoſe works are of a piece with his appearance. He has written the hiſtory of the kings of Rome, but in a manner little to the honour of thoſe founders of that glorious empire. Since matters have begun to mend with him, he puts forth only fugitive pieces, as inſipid as his kings. He has got himſelf to be made comptroller of political news, and keeps the key of foreign gazettes, ſo that the Dutch cannot convey their periodical lies into France but by his leave. With this privilege he has been inveſted by the court, for here the government avails itſelf of every thing. I ſuppoſe we ſhall ſoon ſee a patent for ſelling ballads and ſtory-books.

Who is that author behind all the others? He is no author, he is only a journaliſt. A journaliſt! what is that? He is one who thinks after authors have thought, and who prints what has been before printed. A journal requires no genius or wit, a few of the neweſt productions of the preſs will do. He may well ſit behind all the others, being but the contemptible compiler of a literary paper which he publiſhes.

LETTER LXXVIII.

The Same, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-'e, *Cenſor of the Empire, at* Pekin.

Paris.

EVERY body here talks ethics, yet very few have any morality. There is a ſet of people at Paris, and a very numerous ſet, who are continually diſputing on things they don't believe, and expreſs a mighty zeal for maxims they do not practiſe. The libertines eſpecially keep a great ſtir, and deal moſt in moral arguments. It is now the faſhion to talk of virtue. In France morality is not leſs in vogue than romances. A fine gentleman muſt be

ſo

ſo far acquainted with this part of knowledge, as to be able occaſionally to cope with the doctors of the ſcience.

But this faſhion is not limited to the diſplay of acuteneſs in argument; there is another uſe of it, much more important. Morality itſelf is made an inſtrument of corruption; it is now the ſhorteſt way to the perpetration of vice. A libertine who has a deſign on a woman, never fails making uſe of it.

Not that ſhe who ſuffers herſelf to be deceived, has more virtue than the deceiver; but it is agreed on both ſides to carry an appearance of morality, and thus charge to ſurprize what is always the reſult of a tacit agreement.

The frank and open ſeducers are now in ſuch diſrepute that they can never carry their point. He who would ſucceed in vice, muſt take care to keep up a reputation for morality. A woman ſeldom holds out againſt a man who talks morally: if he proves to her that the delicacy of his ſentiments would not allow of his diſhonouring her from a principle of debauchery, or any other motive than virtue, the ſeduction ſeldom fails of taking effect. Thus is morality turned to a poiſon, and the only way left to religion for purifying the manners, is made uſe of to corrupt them.

LETTER LXXIX.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THERE are people here who make gold, but by their poverty would be little ſuſpected of having any thing to do with ſo gainful a profeſſion. This is called the philoſopher's ſtone, or the great work.

Its adepts are in the utmoſt indigence: the far greateſt part of the Paris gold-makers have no kitchen;

kitchen; and as to their utenſils, a few earthen pans full of liquor make the total.

This art has a long time been allowed to be a mere cheat; and yet every day ſome new cheat ſtarts up. It muſt be an impatience to ſuddenly poſſeſs a large fortune, which betrays a man into this deceitful ſcience.

The common roads to opulence are too long. Now the philoſopher's ſtone promiſes the ſpeedy attainment of immenſe riches. This ſtimulates, and immediately ſets about turning every thing into gold.

A hundred chemiſts ruined in blowing the fire, and dead of mere want only, if I may uſe the expreſſion, fill up the ditches for the cupidity of thoſe who, coming after them, tread on their bodies in the way to the like wretchedneſs.

The world will never be cured of the philoſopher's ſtone. The vaſt advantages it promiſes are too infatuating. Beſides, this fallacious ſcience creates a kind of poſſeſſion; the lively hope it gives of riches, however illuſory, conſtitutes a kind of anticipated enjoyment.

Whilſt men ſhall refer their happineſs to ſome future period, without minding the preſent, they will give themſelves up to this ſcience, becauſe it is ever feeding its practitioners with promiſes; and it is the caſt of the human heart to graſp at promiſes.

LETTER LXXX.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

THE women's hair at Paris is very miſchievous. On growing to any length it ſtudies the art of pleaſing. It is a net for taking men. I have been told of a lady who owes a great many of her conqueſts to a ſingle lock.

It is every morning a long-winded buſineſs to give to a woman's hair the higheſt degree of coquetry it is ſuſceptible of. In the mean time I cannot conceive why they take ſo much pains to make their hair grow down to their heels, and afterwards to truſs it up on their heads, where, to me, it ſeems to make a very cumberſome bulk. Certainly the head of a French woman muſt be ſtronger than that of a man: for beſides ſongs of all kinds, lampoons, ſatires, volumes of romances, and the endleſs names of ſtuffs, ſilks, head-dreſſes, trimmings, laces, blonds, tippets, ribbands, pompoons, &c. with which it is ſtuffed, there is the additional weight of two or three pounds of a white duſt called powder, and five or ſix ounces of an ointment to which they give the name of pomatum.

In China the womens hair grows pointwiſe: one would think that in France it came out of the head in cluſters. The man who has the arrangement of it, for this is always a man's office, divides it into two or three hundred equal parts, papers it up, and afterwards burns it with a red hot iron, thereby making it pliant and traſtable.

There are at Paris four ſorts of women, who diſtinguiſh themſelves by the diſpoſition of their hair, the *friſeules*, the *cheſtnuts*, the *napes*, and the *ſhocks*, from the name of a little dog with ſhort round hair, and to which their head thus dreſſed out has no ſmall reſemblance. I pretty well ſee into the friſeules and cheſtnuts, and eaſily gueſs the drift of thoſe who wear their hair flatted and turned up at the nape of the neck; but why ſome women in France dreſs themſelves like dogs to pleaſe men, is, I own, paſt my comprehenſion.

LET-

LETTER LXXXI.

The Mandarin Sin-hc-ei, *to the Mandarin* Champi-pi, *at* Paris.

Venice.

A Foreigner intending to viſit this republic, muſt leave his tongue at Fucina*, and come to Venice quite dumb.

Silence is the emblem of this government. Every thing in it is wrapped up in myſtery. Polity here ſhrouds itſelf in a denſe gloom.

At Venice babblers are buried alive in a leaden tomb. A man who has once ſpoken is condemned to eternal ſilence. Some for only ſaying one word, have been mute theſe thirty years paſt.

This is horrid tyranny, ſpeech being a faculty of the ſoul, over which the legiſlature has no juſt power, unleſs it diſturbs the political and civil order; and even in this caſe its puniſhment ſhould not go beyond reproof. A ſubject is here puniſhed for ſpeaking, equally as another for acting; which confounds both the degree of crimes and puniſhments.

A ſenate ſtanding in fear of the reflections of private perſons, therein acknowledges its weakneſs.

We ſhould form to ourſelves a plan, and this being once laid down, we ſhould leave ſecond cauſes to act.

Good governments in former times never ſubjected ſpeech to an inquiſition: every one was at liberty to inquire into, and deliver his opinion of what every one was concerned to know, I mean the conduct of the adminiſtration. The public good being the object of government, it overlooked the animadverſions of idlers.

At Rome the people could boldly ſpeak their

* The port where they embark for that capital.

minds on affairs of ſtate; and it was not till after the fall of liberty, and under weak and vicious emperors, that they were awed into ſilence.

Beſides, a ſtate, in ſuppreſſing general reflections, deprives itſelf of a great advantage; for among the people there are always ſome of a ſound way of thinking; and their reflections are ſo far preferable, as they are clear of the prejudices common to place-men. In a word, a man has a right to think, and as a member of ſociety to ſpeak.

LETTER LXXXII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kiétou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

I HAVE not ſhewn to any one the Chineſe memorial, in which the huſband inveighs againſt the Emperor for having taken away his wife. It would only be laughed at here. Morality is not carried ſo far as to make light of the prince's favour; at the firſt appearance of it, probity, honour and religion ground their arms. Such a pedantic morality would be pointed at.

So far are the huſbands in France from accounting ſuch a procedure an affront, that they look on it as an effect of the ſovereign's higheſt eſteem. A family here cannot be more highly honoured, than when the monarch is pleaſed to diſgrace it for his pleaſures. It is a dignity which huſbands even ſolicit. At the election of the preſent reigning favourite, above a hundred memoirs were preſented by married women for that high poſt, and moſt of them are ſaid to have been dictated by the huſbands. The following piece is very different from thy memorial. A huſband himſelf invites his wife, then in the country, to come to town, in order to try whether ſhe could not have the honour of proſtituting herſelf to the King.

" Madam,

" Madam,

" The King has juſt broke with Madam de " M————, he has, at preſent, no miſtreſs: " the place is vacant; and with your beauty, youth " and wit, I make no doubt but that, if our ſove- " reign caſts his eyes on your perſon, you will fix " his heart. You cannot doubt of my love and " fondneſs; and, indeed, there is nothing which " I will not do for your appearing before him with " diſtinction. On receipt of this come away; " we'll go to court together, and I myſelf will pre- " ſent you to Lewis XV. There is no expreſſing " the pleaſure it gives me to think, that, probably, " you will ſoon be in his arms. I am all in rap- " tures at the eminence to which the prince's paſ- " ſion will raiſe our houſe, and the great honour " done to all our family. Ah! my dear ſpouſe, " may you, on reading this, overflow with exulta- " tion, as I do in writing it."

ANSWER.

" Dear ſpouſe,

" At the receipt of your letter I almoſt fainted " away with joy; I am ſetting out, and ſhall fly " with the utmoſt diſpatch to Paris. This is in- " deed a proof of love. I am raviſhed with the " thoughts of it. Your letter ſpeaks the fond lo- " ver, the faithful huſband, and eſpecially a pro- " bity becoming the manners of our age. I will " not offer to diminiſh the glory of your aſſiſting " me to ſubdue our great monarch. I will march " to my ſovereign's bed under your colours; and, " to give the greater luſtre to the honour to which " you aſpire, I will give you leave to undreſs me " on that night, when the prince ſhall conſummate " your happineſs and mine; I even now already " have a ſenſe of the pleaſure, which my love for " you will make me taſte in his embraces. Ah,

" my dear ſpouſe, may you feel thoſe pure rap-
" tures, which I do in this extatic inſtant."

Thou ſeeſt very well that thy memorial would appear quite ridiculous in a nation where the huſbands and wives ſo happily agree.

LETTER LXXXIII.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

AT Paris, my dear Kié-tou-na, taylors are men of no ſmall importance; they confer regard, and have fixed degrees of merit. Many a one who is bowed to, and makes a great deal of noiſe in the world, were it not for his taylor's art in the magnificence and faſhion of his cloaths, would be looked upon no more than any other.

Perhaps I ſhall not eaſily convince thee of it; but thou canſt not think how an embroidered ſuit attracts conſideration.

I know a man who, after long courting the public notice in vain, was complaining to his taylor of the injuſtice of the age; and he not doubting of being well paid, cloſed with his humour, and has ſince dreſſed him out ſo flauntingly, that ever ſince his name is in every body's mouth.

Theſe needle-work accompliſhments are the more valuable, as they may be infinitely diverſified. For inſtance, a taylor, by dreſſes of both ſeaſons, gives a ſummer genius, and a winter merit, both highly finiſhed and in a modiſh taſte.

Fine liveries are alſo diſtinguiſhing qualities. A nobleman, with half a dozen ſhowey lackies, is ſure to make a noiſe in town, and to be reſpected in all companies where that virtue is current.

Periwig-makers may indeed vie with taylors; the courts of juſtice eſpecially owe to them no ſmall part of their merit. Where would be the reſpect paid to the grave judges, without their ample ſquare wigs? The foplings would be pitiful objects indeed without

out periwig-makers; for take away their cheſtnut or frizzled wigs, and what ſort of figure would they make?

They have another very recommendable ſkill of making old men look young. Two ounces of black hair ſhall put a head of ſixty on a level with one of twenty. In this country people are frizzled from the cradle to the coffin.

LETTER LXXXIV.

The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.

Paris.

AS I was lately looking over the papers of a foreign politican, who died about fifteen or twenty years ago, the following paper was found in his ſcrutore.

Political prophecy concerning Europe.

"Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, that the man "of the north, who is riſen from little, ſhall one "day be very great.

"He ſhall ſpoil the eagle, and thus lay the foundations of his power.

"He ſhall at firſt ſide with the cock, to humble "the pride of the lion, the natural ally of the two-"headed bird. He ſhall be cenſured, he ſhall be "ridiculed and laughed at, but ſoon ſhall he ſilence "the voice of ſatire.

"His ſoldiers ſhall put to flight the armies of "young eagles, who have taken the field to oppoſe "his deſigns. His victories ſhall procure to him a "a large dominion, which ſhall be left to him to "keep him quiet.

"But when he ſhall be thought ſlumbering in "peace, he ſhall ſuddenly ſtart up; his giants "ſhall again ſpread like a torrent and invade the "neighbouring ſtates: his forces ſhall be like a "tempeſtuous ſea which no mound can ſtop. In

"excuſe

" excuſe for the irruption, he ſhall ſay, that it is
" to prevent a conſpiracy formed againſt him;
" though the only conſpiracy is that of his own
" making.

" Now he ſhall unite with the lion to curtail the
" power of the cock, and the cock and the two-
" headed bird ſhall league together.

" Then terror ſhall overſpread Europe; it will
" begin to fear. The Teutons, the Franks, the
" men of the country of Ice, and ſeveral petty na-
" tions of Germany, ſhall unite againſt him, but
" he ſhall beat them all.

" The cock, diſpirited by a ruinous war with
" the lion, ſhall make peace with him; and the
" eagle ſhall beg quarter of the man of the north,
" who ſhall grant it him on condition of keeping
" all he has got."

So far the political prophecy might have been made from paſt events, but here it properly begins.

" Verily, verily, I again ſay unto you, that the
" man of the north, who has riſen from little, will
" not ſit down ſo. At the concluſion of a peace,
" ſo far from diſmiſſing his giants, he will exerciſe
" them, and form them a third time for ſieges and
" battles. He will make ſeparate treaties, ſecure
" himſelf allies, ſettle with them the number of
" auxiliaries which they are to furniſh him. When
" every thing is ready, he will watch the inſtant
" of general lethargy, and then again open the
" ſluices of his power. In this war his deſign will
" ſtill be greater, and his views more extenſive.
" His ſcheme will be the ſovereignty of all Europe.

" The man of the north ſhall paſs over a great
" river with an army of giants to attack the cock,
" leaving another behind him as a check on the
" eagle. Then ſhall the Franks mourn for having
" been the firſt inſtruments of his greatneſs. Their
" eyes will open, but it will be too late."

LETTER LXXXV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at* Paris.

Venice.

THIS republic, like Genoa, has a ſovereign, and this ſovereign wears a like diadem, except that it bears a greater reſemblance to a horn. Do not imagine it is ſimilar to that of plenty, this prince being extremely indigent. His moſt ſerene highneſs is lodged, fed and cloathed at the republic's coſt. He is a ſtate-penſioner, who is allowed the bare natural neceſſaries, with a few domeſtics for decorum: as for all the appendages of regal luxury, they muſt come out of his own pocket. The other princes of Europe better themſelves by their ſovereignty. With this prince it is quite the reverſe, he beggars himſelf; there are ſeveral families at Venice in very low circumſtances, purely from their anceſtors having aſcended the throne. Though the Doge of Venice be little better than a cornuted picture, thou canſt not conceive how fond the nobles are of wearing a horn; there is as much buſtle and intrigue for this inſignificant copy of ſovereignty, as if it was an original.

This prince here has the power not to concern himſelf in any thing, and care is taken that he ſhall enjoy his privilege; he is no more than a figure or repreſentation of the power of the ſtate, for the Europeans are ſo fond of images, as to introduce them into their political governments. This ſovereign doe not ſeem much beloved by his ſubjects, at leaſt no body goes into mourning at his death. That day, which every where elſe is devoted to ſadneſs, is here a day of public rejoicings, as maſquerades and balls: they alledge indeed, that the joy ſhewn on this occaſion, does not relate to the deceaſed Doge, but is purely a compliment to their new ſovereign,

ſovereign, and the late prince is thoroughly forgotten, that they may the better mind the preſent.

LETTER LXXXVI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

WERE I to follow the example of multitudes of people here, who give themſelves unwearied trouble to idle from morning to night, I ſhould ſpend my life in the coffee and play-houſes, and the public walks; I ſhould indolently riſe from one place and creep to another, and thus kill time as lying heavy on my hands: but not being ſo much at leiſure as to have nothing to do, I avoid thoſe places which offer no employment to the mind.

Not that I fatigue my mind, for, like the body, it muſt have its recreations; it muſt, if I may be allowed the expreſſion have its breathing times.

The firſt thing I do in the morning, after dreſſing myſelf, is to write down the places where I am to be in the day-time; and, at night, before going to bed, I commit to paper all that I have ſeen, heard and read worth the notice of our court; ſtill I do not ſequeſter myſelf from company, I make one at the walks, and ſometimes go to the play.

Paris is made up of contradictions; ſome people here ſeem to have made a vow of inaction, and others of inceſſant labour; the latter ſcarce allow themſelves time to perceive they exiſt.

A few days ago I was ſhewn one of theſe ſtudious men, who is conſtantly at his books nineteen hours a-day, and makes up the twenty four with allowing one for aliment, and four for ſleep. His ſtudy is, as it were, his tomb whilſt living; it is odds but he will be for haunting the beloved place when dead.

LET-

LETTER LXXXVII.

The Same, to the Superintendant of Religion, at Pekin.

Paris.

THE Europeans look for the Deity in their ſchools, when he is only in heaven. They make a ſcience of the Supreme Being, and are continually arguing on what is beyond all argumentation.

They pretend to define God's nature, and ſay that he is a perfect eſſence, thus debaſing that very Deity of whom they are for ſetting forth the perfections.

Man is finite and God indefinite; now there can be no relation between two beings, of which one has a beginning, and the other is without an end.

All the qualities of man are connected with the ſubject of his eſſence, and to this alone relate all his ſenſes and ideas.

To ſay that God is a perfect Being, means no more than that he is all thoſe perfections of which the human mind can form any idea. Now this idea of perfection, relatively to God, is mere imperfection.

The ancients covered ſome of their Deities with a veil, thereby intimating that the nature of them was incomprehenſible; which I think, was a great piece of wiſdom.

Thoſe ſchools where the eſſence of God is diſcuſſed, I would have ſhut up, as meddling with a ſcience to which human underſtanding is not equal; and it were well that all religions ſhould be reduced into moral practice.

Where is the uſe of ſpeaking about what we do not underſtand? and pretending to define what is above definition, by a knowledge ſo imperfect and weak as ours? Would it not be better to worſhip God as he is, than to ſpend our lives in ſtudying what he is not?

LET-

LETTER LXXXVIII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, *to the Mandarin* Cham-pi-pi, *at* Paris.

Venice.

PEOPLE here are divided into two orders, nobility and commonalty; both are branches of the ſame ſtock, only the former got their names written in a gold book, which the others forgot to do; ſo that the whole difference lies in the book.

Some, to repair this want of memory, procure themſelves to be inrolled, but for this a conſiderable ſum muſt be paid to the editor; ſo that the golden book is become ſo in a double ſenſe; and the whole difference between a noble and commoner, lies in the ſum for inrollment.

The nobles of the new edition, however, are ſo far from being on a level with the antient in eſteem, that the open contempt ſhewn to them, makes them grudge the purchaſe money of their honour.

The antient families, alone, are treated with a diſtinction due to their rank; and, it muſt be owned, they thoroughly deſerve it. A nobleman of an antient deſcent, to enjoy all the regard his birth can claim, muſt have walked the *Broglio* thirty years, intrigued for the principal poſts of the republic, protected a good number of women, been noted for playing deep, have kept miſtreſſes, horſes, hounds, and equipage, on the *Brenta*, &c. &c.

Yet let us not think that virtue is totally extinguiſhed at Venice. No, the republic ſtill affords very great men, who adorn their rank with all the exalted virtues of the Romans, their progenitors.

LET-

LETTER LXXXIX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi *to the Mandarin* Kié-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

IT is happy for us, dear Kié-tou-na, that the largeſt tract of the univerſe to which we belong, is under the dominion of one only ſovereign. Were it not for that abſolute power which has abſorbed all the reſt, China, like moſt of the other empires of the world, would now be the ſcene of ſlaughter and war.

I have ſearched into the cauſe of thoſe inceſſant conteſts, by which Europe has for ſeveral ages been torn to pieces, and it ſeems to lie in the diviſions of the general power.

Every nation in Europe is a particular family, which is nearly concerned to weaken another; this is called the intereſts of princes. It greatly heightens the character of a ſtate to have diminiſhed the ſtrength of a neighbour, and grafted its own greatneſs on the ruin of an adjacent power. The great family is diſmembered, in order to augment the ſtrength of the ſmaller, and the deſtruction of that leads to the period of theſe, the branches being incorporated with the ſtem.

All the diviſions of the political intereſts from the body of Europe, anſwer no good purpoſe. The general confuſion will ever affect particular ſtates.

Let us ſuppoſe the collective power to conſiſt of fifty degrees of ſtrength; if wars and diviſions deprive it of ten, the particular nations compoſing that power will become weak in proportion. The cauſe of this univerſal weakneſs not being felt, is that it is almoſt imperceptible; the general power being apparently ever the ſame.

But were this debilitation merely ideal, there is ſtill a real and no ſmall evil, the calamities of the people.

Moſt of the hiſtorians of the continent tell us, that, about the middle of the laſt century, a Chriſtian prince had thoughts of invading Europe, or, which is the ſame thing, of reducing it into one ſingle dominion; and that all nations were extremely terrified at ſuch a deſign, that is to ſay, they were afraid of being made happy.

It is ſomething very ſtrange, that tho' moſt of the European nations groan under their preſent yoke, they would rather abſolutely periſh than allow a greater power to interfere for their deliverance.

LETTER XC.

The Same, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, *at* Pekin.

Paris.

I HAVE heard the ſoul compared to a tablet on which our ideas are written. If ſo nothing is written on the ſouls of moſt Frenchmen. Seven-eighths of them are mere automata. They have a ſoul indeed, but a very ſtupid one, without underſtanding or knowledge.

Genius depends on education; and as the number of perſons educated is very ſmall, all the others are left to their natural rudeneſs. It may be ſaid, that there is ſcarce a Frenchman in France.

I have been aſſured, that four millions of the mighty King Lewis's ſubjects know not a letter in the alphabet, and above ſix millions never had a pen in their hands. No education is to be had here without wealth. It is only the eaſy families which are in the way of learning to be Frenchmen.

Not that France is without public ſchools where learning is to be had for nothing; but theſe ſchools are ſo ill managed, that they rather ſpoil than form the mind. The good maſters are only to be found among the children of the rich. Here the ſtate is nothing better for education. Were it not for the climate,

climate, the French people would be the moſt ſtupid in the univerſe.

LETTER XCI.

The Same, to the Mandarin Prime Miniſter, at Pekin.

Paris.

A GOVERNMENT by being too ſtrict and particular in its enquiries, expoſes itſelf to ridicule, and ſatire will not fail to laſh it moſt ſeverely. I herewith ſend you the copy of a paper, which is privately read with great ſatisfaction, as a libel on ſuch abuſes.

" *Memorial to his Excellency the Count de St. Floren-*
" *tine, Miniſter and Secretary of State for Paris.*

" Your excellency's zeal for maintaining the ho-
" nour of the crown, together with your vigilance
" and pains in baniſhing, impriſoning, and other-
" wiſe puniſhing ſuch of the King's ſubjects who
" preſumed to complain of their diſtreſſes, has
" ſilenced every body. But, my lord, to have de-
" prived the people of the uſe of ſpeech, is not
" enough; the public tranquillity and good policy
" farther require, that certain mute invectives a-
" gainſt the government, uttered every day, with-
" out ſpeaking, ſhould be prevented.

" For inſtance, there are in Paris many ill-af-
" fected perſons, who only with looks and moti-
" ons openly arraign the adminiſtration, and vent
" the moſt bitter complaints againſt it without ſay-
" ing a word. Others there are, whoſe offence is
" ſtill greater; they who, in their ſleep, have had
" dreams derogatory to the marchioneſs's glory,
" and that of the miniſters of ſtate, theſe are
" treaſonable crimes of which your ſpies have no
" ſcent.

" For putting a ſtop to ſuch miſchiefs, the con-
" ſequences of which may prove extremely detri-

" mental to the French monarchy, I would pro-
" poſe to your excellency two inſtitutions.
" One is an inſpector general of looks and gri-
" maces; the other a dream-office.
" For the firſt poſt I have an Italian, who is him-
" ſelf a very ſkilful pantomime; he knows a man's
" meaning by the bare motion of his eyes; in the
" art of decyphering geſtures, he has ſcarce his e-
" qual; there is not a contortion nor grimace in
" nature, but he immediately ſees whence it ariſes;
" he can diſcover the malice of a ſmile, and to him
" the leaſt motion of the body or the arms, lays
" open the motions of the mind.
" For inſtance, if at a panegyric on the mar-
" chioneſs in a coffee-houſe, any one lifts up his
" eyes, he will immediately have him taken up.
" If on hearing the treaſurer extolled, one of the
" company bites his lips, he will ſecure him. If
" at hearing the conduct of our generals in Ger-
" many praiſed, and our campaigns there mag-
" nified, a man ſhakes his head two or three times,
" and abruptly goes from his place, he will make
" him his priſoner.
" As to the dream office, this the ſupreme pow-
" er muſt take in hand; ſuch an eſtabliſhment can-
" not be erected without an arret from the King,
" injoining all his good and faithful ſubjects to
" inform the office of all their ſuſpicious or ambi-
" guous dreams, againſt the miniſtry and perſons
" in favour. To this purpoſe a ſecond inſpector
" of bed-ſides ought to be eſtabliſhed in every ward,
" and he every morning ſhould go and take an ac-
" count of dreams, and report them to your ex-
" cellency, that before ten o'clock you may be in-
" formed how the people ſlept concerning ſtate-
" affairs. This office is of great importance to
" the ſafety of the crown. Your excellency is too
" well acquainted with antient hiſtory, not to
" know, that a Roman emperor put a perſon to
" death, for having dreamt that he had cut his
" throat;

" throat; saying, that he would not have dreamt " of it in the night, if he had not thought of it in " the day.

" For the sake of clemency a distinction might " be made in this nocturnal high treason into " weighty and impressive dreams, and the light and " volatile. For instance, a person seeing in a " dream the marchioness with a pale and faded " face, and with her the King, wondering himself " at his fondness for her after the loss of her charms, " should be exiled only for three months; but " should he dream that she is disgraced, and that " the King has ordered her to quit the court, this " being down-right high treason, he and his fa- " mily should be banished the kingdom for ever."

LETTER XCII.

The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.

Paris.

EVERY one here pretends to direct the affairs of all Europe. Paris swarms with people continually beating their brains about regulations.

A general congress for terminating the quarrels of the belligerant powers was no sooner begun to be talked of, than immediately came out a plan for preventing the difficulties which the plenipotentiaries of the sovereign courts might occasion in this assembly. As I thought the piece something curious, I send it thee. I suppose it is a banter on the minute formalities of ministers.

Regulations for the Establishment of a Congress.

ART. I. The five great belligerant powers, now at war, being desirous of peace, shall cause to be made five easy chairs for the use of their plenipotentiaries at the congress.

II. To prevent all mistakes, and that no *qui pro quo* of ranks may retard the general peace of Europe, there

there ſhall be a diſtinction of colours. France's eaſy chair ſhall be of white velvet, the Queen of Hungary's of green, and the like of the other crowns, according to their liveries.

III. Theſe eaſy chairs ſhall be three feet broad, and four deep, except that for the plenipotentiary of Great Britain, which is to be eight deep; an Engliſh ambaſſador's back-ſide being as big again as that of a Frenchman, a Pruſſian or a Muſcovite.

IV. A large eaſy chair of red velvet, ſhall though only for form's ſake, be ſet for the Spaniſh mediator; but this chair ſhall be empty, without any mediator ſitting in it.

V. There ſhall be four common chairs for the ambaſſadors of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and the United Provinces.

VI. All the envoys of the petty German princes ſhall ſit on ſtools; and ſhould they inſiſt on chairs of any kind, they ſhall be expelled the aſſembly, as the peace of Europe may be brought about without them.

VII. The congreſs chamber ſhall be meaſured geometrically, and divided into as many different parts as there ſhall be negotiators.

VIII. And that no plenipotentiary may treſpaſs on the ground of another, and inſenſibly elbow out one who precedes him, the parts ſhall be ſeparated by boundaries.

IX. The plenipotentiary of France ſhall have the precedence of all others, and ſpeak the firſt, not on account of the antiquity of this monarchy, or as if ſuch precedence was its right, but as being the greateſt ſufferer.

X. The next to him, for the like reaſon, ſhall be the Queen of Hungary's plenipotentiary, and thus of the others, as far as the King of Pruſſia.

XI. The French miniſter ſhall ſpeak in a ſupplicatory voice, the Hungarian with a mortified countenance, the Ruſſian is to ſigh, the elector of Saxony's miniſter to weep; but the voice of the King

King of Prussia's minister shall be strong and decisive, that of the English negotiator, sonorous and definitive.

XII. The French agent shall be in a kind of undress, the Imperial negotiator in a plain suit, the Polish Ambassador in deep mourning, the Prussian in an uniform, the Muscovite like a money-dealer, the ambassador from England alone to be in a full dress.

XIII. Nothing to be talked of at this congress, but the business on which it meets.

XIV. The treaty of Westphalia not to be mentioned.

XV. Not a word of indemnification or compensation.

XVI. The plenipotentiaries shall especially forbear these, or the like expressions: *The king my master will have it so; such are the ultimate intentions of the monarch whose rights I assert. If this be insisted on I am gone: I protest against this article; I break off the negotiations; I cannot sign on any other conditions.*

XVII. There shall be no visits nor private conferences during the negotiation. The minister of England shall not have any intercourse with the Prussian; and the King of France's ambassador shall not be seen with the Queen of Hungary's.

XVIII. Instead of Burgundy and Champaigne, which shall be totally prohibited, the negotiators shall drink only small white Rhenish, the fumes of which cannot obstruct the happy termination of the congress.

XIX. The ambassadors are not to make feasts, nor to spend the night at cards or dice, nor to give entertainments to the ladies, till the treaty shall be signed.

The END of the SECOND VOLUME.

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